

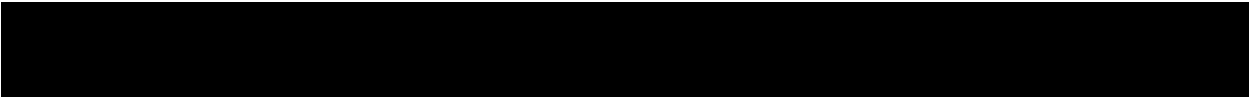
MEMORY

# ULTIMATE MEMORY



An Advanced Strategy To Remember Everything,  
Learn Anything At God Speed, Re Activate  
Your **Brain** Now.

AMANDA ADAMS



An advanced strategy to remember  
everything, learn anything at god speed,  
activate your brain now.

# ***AMANDA ADAMS***

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# Introduction

Memories are the most wonderful things a man can treasure. And remembering these precious moments needs a sharp memory that your brain needs to develop. Where everyone is juggling multiple tasks simultaneously, it has become difficult to set clear goals and live a focused life style. In spite of having the requisite talent and zeal, people are still incapable of reaching the preferred satisfaction levels they strive to achieve in their professional and personal lives. People eventually end up getting confused and confounded as to the path they are upon, which leads to a total demotivation to see the road to the end. This creates an unhealthy, undesirable state of mind where the person is more likely to give up and give in to failure.

This book will help you discover new things to improve your memory, concentration and reasoning skills to achieve a successful and fruitful life. Tips and strategies stated in this book are very helpful for your studies, career and other daily activities. **You can** adopt the enlisted maneuvers in their daily living for combating with the issue of low concentration power. If you are unable to focus on the study and facing high failures in your academic journey then this guidebook will help to pull you out and change the failures into the triumph. Sometimes, diverted concentration also embarrasses you in front of the audience; this book also reveals the basic facts to deal with. The techniques are assembled and explained in a way to provide you the best possible procedure to remove the dearth of concentration power.

With such advancement in technology and other aspects, there is an abundance of resources available for the task at hand, waiting at our doorstep. All that is required from our side is a little effort to recognize these resources and use them to their fullest potential, by knowing when and where to utilize these resources. Sitting around aimlessly, wishing for miracles to happen will not produce any results. With the help of this book, long term large goals need to be divided into short term, smaller ones so the mind is able to devote its complete focus to achieving the immediate goal. In this way, by stacking bricks together, we can build the castle of our dreams. But it must start with us!

This book will also cover the ever daunting reality of dementia which often left in the shadows of ignorance. This will give you more insights how to deal with and other helpful information that will raise your awareness. Life is a journey and not a destination. Since human beings are goal-seeking individuals, we will keep on craving for more. It is a need to be filled, to have a sense of purpose and fulfillment. There's nothing bad in pursuing goals, but not having time to smell the flowers along the way isn't what one calls fully living.

Not everyone knows that being mindful of the present moment will help you achieve your goals as you become more productive and appreciate life more, and you become fully aware of what's going on around you at the present time as you journey. It's like traveling on the road to search for a certain place. How could you arrive at the destination if you just focused on the road without looking around for the landmarks?

# Chapter 1: Understanding the Basic

Your brain is amazing and undiscovered by you and the scientists who spend their lives trying to understand it. But have you been neglecting it? Left it idling, dormant, wasted by doing nothing stimulating and exciting? Are you growing and flexing the most powerful memory tool and processor ever made and optimizing its potential? You see you were born a genius in divergent thinking, creative, spontaneous and with the ability to learn any foreign language in the world before the age of 2 and you did.

Now that you are older you may be struggle with simple concepts and ideas. You may find learning new things difficult. Some people even say, “I’m too old to learn” and the truth is that the older you get the more difficult learning becomes only because of our society our environment and the fact that you were born with 150 billion neurons and now only have about 100 billion left.

The one thing that changed for you around the age of 6 was that you started school. School is that one thing that changed everything for you, you started getting educated and you learnt amongst other things to read and write and to interpret the alphabet A-Z and our number system 0-9. You were moved from a right-hemisphere thinker to a left-hemisphere thinker and that was catastrophic, as it diminished your learning capacity drastically.

The longer you stayed in school the worst it got. School creates “slow” logical learners who spend all their time striving for the right answers. School also taught you that getting it wrong was bad and in some cases punished those for wrong answers.

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## Brain Anatomy

The Brain is the essential part of the Nervous System. The Nervous System mainly consists of Central Nervous System and Peripheral Nervous System. The Brain is the Integral Part Central Nervous System. It is indeed the command center of the human physiological system.

The central nervous system is the division of the nervous system located in the skull and spine. A cell body is the metabolic center of the neuron also referred anatomically as the soma. The peripheral nervous system is the division of the nervous system located outside the skull and spine. In a sense the peripheral nervous system is very much the opposite of the central nervous system.

Here are some of the essential parts of the brain that you need to know.

- Dendrites are the short processes emanating from the cell body which receive the majority of the synaptic contacts from other neurons.
- Axons are the long narrow processes projecting from the cell body.
- Terminal buttons are the button-like endings of the axon branches releasing chemicals into synapses.
- Synapses are the gaps between adjacent neurons across which chemical signals transmit.
- Dura mater meninx is the top layer of the three meninges surrounding the subarachnoid space absorbing spinal fluid.
- Mesencephalon is the midbrain consisting of the tectum and tegmentum where pain sensors and the sensory motor system are controlled
- Arachnoid meninx is the middle layer of the three meninges surrounding the subarachnoid space absorbing spinal fluid.
- Cerebrospinal fluid protects the central nervous system by filling the subarachnoid space, the central canal of the spinal cord, and the cerebral ventricles of the brain.

- Diencephalon is the uppermost portion of the brain stem and part of the forebrain consisting of the thalamus and hypothalamus controlling motivated behavior.
- Pia mater meninx is the top layer of the three-meninges surrounding the subarachnoid space absorbing spinal fluid.
- The telencephalon consists of the right and left cerebral hemispheres mediating the brain's most complex functions.
- Metencephalon consists of the pons and cerebellum and is the second lowest sector of the brain stem.
- Myelencephalon also referred to as the medulla is the most posterior division of the brain, and is composed largely of tracts sending signals from the brain to the body.

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## How Human Brain Works

There are five essential part of the brain. Here are the five parts explained in details for you to understand better how brain works per parts. Let us start by understanding the two major lobes of the brain, the right and the left hemisphere.

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## The Hemisphere of the Brain

Now that you know a little more about your brain's capabilities, let's look at the strengths of your two Neo-cortex's or hemispheres, those two big parts of your brain on the top. Once you know what they are capable of achieving and their strengths only then will you be able to unlock it's their true potential.



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## - Right Hemisphere:

It thinks and communicates via, Imagination (The ability to create or invent). It uses feeling (an emotional perception or attitude) it uses Symbols and pictures (Fast to create). “Big picture” oriented (Overall concepts). Fantasy based (Something imagined and does not correspond with reality)

What are the strengths of the right-hemisphere? The right-hemisphere deals with present and future information or events. It finds meaning. It believes, trusts and has confidence in the reliability of something without proof. It appreciates and is aware of things. It uses spatial perception. It knows object function, uses and the purpose for which something are designed. It presents possibilities and problem solves. It is impetuous & risk taking.

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## Left Hemisphere:

It thinks and communicates via, facts and verifies information about past or present information or events. It uses logic and draws conclusions. It is strong with words and language and is slow to describe things. It is detail oriented and looks at the finer detail. It is reality based and only looks at the state of things as they actually are.

What are the strengths of the left-hemisphere? The left-hemisphere deals with the present and past information or events. It comprehends and understands the meaning of things. It knows and looks for the truth. It acknowledges and admitting something to be real or true. It thinks in an orderly or patterned perception of things and recognizes the relationship between things. It knows the name of objects and forms strategies or plans a method for obtaining goals. It is practical & safe and is mindful of the results.

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## Posterior Part of the Brain

The myelencephalon is the most posterior part of the brain, and one of the two sections of the brain in the hindbrain. The myelencephalon is composed of tracts carrying signals between the rest of the brain and the body. The myelencephalon is explained as possessing a reticular formation (resembling a net in form). The myelencephalon resembles two fairly long and thin strands spanning from the base of the brain stem up to and through the mesencephalon but not entering the diencephalon at the uppermost region of the brain stem. The reticular formation of the myelencephalon plays a role in a variety of functions including: arousal, sleep, attention, movement, the maintenance of muscle tone, and various cardiac, circulatory, and respiratory reflexes. As one may suspect damage to the myelencephalon can be and is often life threatening.

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## The Forebrain

The diencephalon is part of the forebrain and uppermost part of the brain stem. The diencephalon consists of both the thalamus and hypothalamus. The diencephalon resembles to some extent two miniature bike helmets from above, compressed against one another lying atop the hypothalamus slightly protruding from the thalamus. The optic nerves connect to the hypothalamus, and the thalamus transmits signals to the cortex for vision to function properly. The hypothalamus also functions to regulate motivated behavior.

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## The Midsection of the Brain

The mesencephalon is the only section of the midbrain and resembles a cylinder connecting the metencephalon to the diencephalon. The mesencephalon is partly surrounded by the metencephalon, and consists of the reticular formation of the myelencephalon running through its interior. The mesencephalon consists of two divisions the tectum and the tegmentum. The tectum possesses audial and visual functions. The tegmentum's gray mediates the effects of opiate drugs, includes the substantia nigra (black substance), and possesses a red nucleus bearing importance in regard to the functions of the sensory motor system

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## The Upper Part

The telencephalon is the uppermost part of the forebrain. It is the largest section of the brain encompassing all not classified as the brain stem. The telencephalon's appearance is a squishy, wrinkled, walnut-shaped hunk of tissue. The two cerebral hemispheres of the telencephalon covered by a layer of tissue is the cerebral cortex. The convoluted surface of the cerebral cortex increases the amount of cerebral cortex associated with large mammals. The fissures within the brain the longitudinal, lateral, and central create four sectional lobes the frontal, parietal, temporal, and occipital. Ninety percent of human cerebral cortex is neocortex a six layered cortex of recent evolution. The remaining 10% of the cerebral cortex is not neocortex possessing fewer than six layers and of primitive evolutionary origin.

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## Pons and the Cerebellum

The metencephalon consists of the pons and the cerebellum the location of which is in the hindbrain. The pons connects to the brain stem, and the cerebellum (otherwise referred as the little brain) attached to the pons presses against both the occipital and temporal lobes. Damage to the metencephalon section will make it difficult to control one's movements precisely as the cerebellum is an important sensory motor structure.

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## Some Trivial Facts about the Brain

Did you know that your brain covers more mystery than any part of your body? Your brain cannot feel pain. A headache, known medically as cephalalgia, is a continuous pain in the head and is not felt in the brain. The pain is caused by disturbances of the pain-sensitive structures around the brain. Your brain weighs about  $\pm 3$  lb or 1.3 kg and has a size around 1260 cm<sup>3</sup> in men and 1130 cm<sup>3</sup> in women. Your head including your brain weighs about 15 lb or  $\pm 7$  kg, go lie on a scale and see...20% of the oxygen and calories your body needs goes to your brain. Your brain is 80% water. Your brain is a nocturnal organ. That means its active at night. So you can only learn new skills if you sleep on it. The best time to study is therefore in the evening. Morning sessions are ok but not as effective. The “smarter” you are the more you dream. That doesn’t mean that if you don’t dream you’re dumb, you probably just can’t remember them. All your brain needs to operate is a 10 – 23 Watt power supply. You have on average 70,000 thoughts per day.

Your brain can store everything. It cannot get full and there is no such thing, as “I need to make space so I must delete some data.”

Your brain has the physical capability to do at least 20 million billion calculations per second. This is because you

Have around 100 billion neurons multiply that by 200 the average firing speed per second per neuron multiplied by 1000 minimum synapses/connections per neuron. This gives us the 20 million billion calculations/thoughts per second... However your brain’s average processing speed right now is a lot slower than your brain’s processing capabilities with it taking around 300 -700 milliseconds or 0.3 – 0.7 seconds per thought. So I ask you, how can you improve your brainpower? Well you can improve your brainpower by, learning something new every day, regular exercise, doing the brain-chain memory exercise, stay curious keep asking questions, be positive, eat health food, read a book, get enough sleep, limit your time doing Facebook, Twitter etc. and throw away your calculator.

How much can your brain store? It can store around 1.2 gigabytes [GB] to 1136 terabytes [TB] of data and that’s approximately 2200 laptop computers. This is a lot of processing capacity and memory space and it’s your default



setting. You didn't even ask for it or pay for it; it came free when you were born. When we look at the storage capacity of the human body the number gets really, really big. It is estimated that the human body has between 10 trillion and 100 trillion cells; each cell contains +- 0.35 GB of data amounting to 35 trillion gigabytes, or 34,179,687,500 terabytes of information.

How amazing is that? I'm telling you this is because you have got to start believing you are magnificent and that your potential is limitless. The scary thing is, if you think you are smart, beautiful, and wonderful and champion your brain will help you be that, but if you think you are stupid, weak, ugly, and a failure, your brain will help you be that too. Its job is to fulfil your thoughts so be careful what you think, you are want you think you are.

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## The Importance of Understanding Your Brain

You need all this information as a factual analysis of your brain's capabilities and now we need to understand the different levels of thinking and learning. Not everyone has the ability to perform all 6 of these and that's your challenge. Until you master all 6 you will be stuck at an intellectual level well below your potential. The question is where on the intellectual ladder do you want to be and how can you move up to the highest level of thinking and learning?

Thinking and learning starts with your ability to Memorize and remember things. This is the lowest order of thinking with most humans over the age of 5 or 6 only being able to activate their left-hemisphere's short-term memory at best, unfortunately. This short-term memory only has the ability to remember up to seven things. So the fact that you keep learning by repetition means only one thing and that is you are using the wrong side of your brain, you are using your left-hemisphere.

Your left-hemisphere is unable to effectively learn any new unfamiliar information. Your left-hemisphere has 'good' short-term memory and can only work with small repetitive chunks of information and so you will continue to struggle if you continue to learn this way. If you want genius capabilities you need to move over to the right-hemisphere where your strength lies.

Stage 2 is also left-hemisphere driven and deals with the Understanding or conceptualizing of information to a given measure. The ability to understand why, how, when, who and what is often difficult and I wonder if you are perhaps stuck at this stage?

Stage 3 deals with your ability to apply what you have remembered and understood either in the examinations or the real world, or to take the information and use it in a different context, to expand it creatively.

Stage 4 is your ability to use your right-hemisphere and Analyse information and data into separate parts, making it easier to understand and ultimately remember.

Stage 5 requires you to keep using the right-hemisphere and be able to

evaluate things and express an opinion about what you remember, understand and or applied. Expressing an opinion is often difficult and takes courage and conviction. You also need to know what you are talking about so you have to have championed all the lower stages of thinking that includes remembering the facts understanding the relevance of the facts, being able to apply what you understand by the facts and analyse the facts or information taken from different sources.

Stage 6, and the final stage and the highest level of thinking deals with your ability to Create new ideas, or the use of your creative imagination and once again activate your right-hemisphere. Here I'm not talking about synthetic imagination or the changing of things that already exist or making them better, but the invention of something new, something that hasn't been invented yet.

You see everything in our world has already been invented and was first invented in someone's imagination, before it was created physically. None of this could have been achieved with linear, logical, safe, left-hemisphere thinking alone. You have to open up your mind too or be open-minded and start thinking differently.

Start thinking with your right-hemisphere and let your left recognize those great ideas. You see creative thinking was not and is still not encouraged in many schools or companies today and therefore doesn't come naturally. Remember the saying "Use it or lose it" and so you now have to work really hard to get it back because you had it and lost it along the way.

The attributes of us being human with higher order whole-brain thinking activated gives us the ability amongst others to; learn new unfamiliar things, have an imagination, gain knowledge, explore, reason, understand, introspection, problem solve, memorize, adapt, make decisions, have wisdom, think critically and rationally to name a few. Isn't it exciting to be at this level of thinking and learning? The wonder and anticipation of what you were born for, and what you are capable of and what you can still achieve must be inspiring, motivating and hopefully keeps you awake at night.

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## What is Memory?

Learning and memory are the two most magical properties of the human mind. Learning is the ability to acquire new information, and memory holds the new information in place over time. Memory is the foundation to all learning. If memory is not set in place, all you are doing is throwing information into a deep hole never to be used again. The problem is that many people are not recalling what they know, and they are constantly learning and forgetting, and learning and forgetting, and learning and forgetting...

When you improve your memory, you improve everything. You can access information more quickly and more easily – creating greater opportunities for connections and associations. The more facts and memories that you have properly stored in your brain, the more potential you have to make unique combinations and connections. An increased memory also enhances basic intelligence because intelligence is based on all of the events, people, and facts that you can recall. The more you remember, the more you can create and do because factual knowledge always precedes skill. Information can only be built onto more information, so the more you know the easier it is to get to know more.

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## Types of Memory

There are basically three types of memory; long-term memory, sensory and the short memory.

### Long-term memory

This type of memory are known to be stored in long period of time thru the process of consolidation and reinforcement of meaningful stimulus over a period of time. Short term memories can be a long term memories if they are associated with a strong rehearsals of repetitive stimulus with the same desire result.

Forgetting is usually unusual for the same stimulus creates same response creating the expected learning process thus information's are stored in a long term.

So how do you at least master Stage 1 of thinking and learning that being, Memory? We all I know is that being able to memorize large volumes of complex information from different sources can be difficult. You see when you know how, nothing is difficult just unfamiliar or unlearned yet. As Albert Einstein said, "If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough." So we need to change and convert everything we read or hear into its simplest form, and for me, that's a picture.

Making pictures of everything complex or unfamiliar pushes the word or idea into right-hemisphere thinking and by default stimulates long-term memory. This is nothing new to you as you have always and currently see everything in pictures through your imagination and that's right-hemisphere thinking.

All mammals see things in pictures and have long-term memory as you know. Other mammal species cannot read or write like we can, but still remember their young. Lion's for example know the shapes of many different things; they know what their prey looks like.

I've never seen a lion attack a tree or mistake a rock for food. They know and remember what food; trees, water, other animal's etc. look, taste and smell like. This is because they put pictures, taste and smell of these things into

their long-term memory. They only see the physical picture or image of it.

There are no labels in nature guiding animals and showing them where things are. Long-term memory resides in the hippocampus a part of all mammals' brain's limbic system. The only way to reach this place is through pictures and to increase or improve your long-term memories add emotion. Emotion excites neural transmission, speeding up connections and the formation of memories.

We know this to be true, because post-traumatic stress disorder is a type of anxiety disorder that can occur after someone has experienced an extremely emotional trauma that involved the threat of injury or death to himself or herself or someone else. This disorder is very difficult to erase from one's memory and sits deep in the long-term memory or the subconscious mind.

The memory is easily recalled and one goes through the same anxiety as before even if the threat of injury or death is just imagined and not true. We need to use this knowledge when studying. I'm not saying you need to experience a traumatic event while studying and in that way you will learn quicker. And remember for longer. What I'm saying is that an excited mind can trick the brain into believing you are excited, even if the subject bores you. You see that's your mind's purpose, its purpose is to fulfil your thoughts and dreams and then tell your body to go do something about it.

Getting back to the thinking and learning stuff. Our brain has not evolved and struggles with the learning of words that strangely are only made up of a combination of 26 letters (A – Z). We try to learn by rote or as they say in the classics “off by heart” I've never really understood why cramming words and concepts into your short-term memory is called “off by heart” learning. But as we know it takes time and is just not effective. You keep going back over work just learned, you spend so much time revising over what you learned an hour ago or a week ago that you struggle to finish studying.

You wouldn't dare start studying weeks and weeks before writing examinations or tests, because by the time you write the exam or test you would have forgotten what you learned, yes? Not to mention mental blocks that cost you dozens of marks. Just a thought, has this ever happened to and you try seeing the page in your textbook where the answer lies, but nothing jumps off the page and you are unable to recall the answer.

You give up, put your pen down as time is up, you sigh with relief or

frustration and suddenly you remember and are able to recall all the answers but it's too late the examination is over. That's a drag because you know the answers but unfortunately were unable to show your examiner that you do.

This only happens when you learn/input information the wrong way. It was your left-hemisphere's short-term memory letting you down. You? You're in an examination and you cannot remember an answer to a question you know you learned well. You struggle to recall the facts, so you even try to visualize yourself sitting at your desk

## Sensory memory

Sensory memory are usually known as ultrashort memory for its ability to retain sensory information which usually easily to forget. This type of memory are usual a stimulus receive in the sensory level and does not last for any time soon.

## Short time memory

Short time memory are known as scratch pad of the memory. This are usually the retrievable memories for a stimulus that has a limited aspects of association and creating a conditional response. This are usually memories that are easily replace in favour to a more relative data for future use.

# Chapter 2: What is Memory Improvement?

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## Brain and Memory Improvement

Whether your brain can be repaired or not really depends on the scientific stance that you take. However, there is more and more evidence that mental and physical stimulation can result in better memory, concentration and speed at completing tasks. That means that there is every reason to keep your brain active by training it in different ways.



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## **The Difficulties of Memory Improvement**

Humans are designed to build their brains – neuroplasticity is a new concept, but it's an age-old skill. Without our ability to learn, humanity would not have survived as long as it has. This is where the good news lies for anybody who feels that their own mental abilities are set for life. Learning new skills, developing new structures in the brain and learning to behave in new ways are what your brain is built for; it will take to the process naturally and will be your own biggest ally! Some of the tips in this book are surprisingly simple and will be easy to master. Some are harder and will take time, but will, ultimately, help to build a stronger mind and improve your mental energy and the sharpness of your mind.

# Chapter 3: Dementia

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## What is Memory Loss?

When people heard the dementia they often confuse it with amnesia although amnesia which common popularized in television as complete loss of memory due to some traumatic experiences, Dementia is more of an umbrella term for all of the physiological and psychological disorders regarding memory impairment and disorders. Dementia is much more than occasional forgetfulness or absentmindedness, which we all will have experienced from time to time. Dementia is not part of the normal aging process, although the risks of developing many types of dementia will increase with age. It is rather an abnormal state of the brain. This abnormal state is associated with underlying abnormal changes in the brain.

Precisely what these changes will be will be dependent upon the type of dementia that the person gets. While it is commonplace for people to talk about dementia as a whole, it is important to realise that dementia, as a distinct illness does not exist.

What does exist are over 100 distinct types of dementia. Consequently, when people talk about dementia, what they are really talking about is a group of different diseases that have different causes. What they all share is an abnormal state of the brain. They also share some common components.

The first two components are global mental impairment linked to a wide-ranging decline in mental functioning. Another component is that normal consciousness persists. That is to say that they are not in a state of unconsciousness, coma or stupor. The final component is severity. Dementia is not a trivial impairment. There needs to be a level of severity that is severe enough to impact significantly upon the activities of daily living of that person.

The term dementia thus incorporates Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia, and much more. It is therefore true to say that, Alzheimer's disease is a specific type of dementia. However, it is not true to say that, all types of

dementia are Alzheimer's disease. In addition, it is highly likely that the number of recognised diseases that falls under the general umbrella term of dementia will grow still further, as research continues into dementia in general.

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## **Causes of Memory Loss**

Brain inactivity earlier in life is one of the common reasons of the memory loss. Some are genetically predetermined. Some cases are known as physiological in nature. Autism Spectrum Disorder are well known as attention and memory disorder. People who are commonly suffering from this type of disorder are known for its specific memory retention thus prominent sensory and short term memories are very common.

Some are psychological in nature. Schizophrenia Spectrum Disorder are common psychotic disorder causing temporary to permanent memory loss due to delusional and hallucinatory memories which often affects the lifestyle of the affected individual.

Alzheimer is the common degenerative memory loss disorder among older people due to deterioration of brain's physiological aspect due to age advancement. It is common among women than men and mostly it is permanent in nature. In Alzheimer's disease, there is an abnormal formation of proteins within and outside of brain cells. These formations damage directly or indirectly the brain and its functioning. Brain cell death will occur and the brain will shrink considerably as the disease progresses.

The disease typically takes many years to develop. It is common for the diagnosis of the disease to be relatively late. Neurotransmitters in the brain become affected because of this disease process, but they are not the cause of the disease but rather a consequence of it.

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## **Symptoms of Memory Loss**

The most common symptoms of memory loss are the following:

- Common words are easily forgotten
- Repeating the same questions over the same time
- Confusing some words which are in the same sounds like
- Difficulties in completing familiar tasks
- Getting lost in familiar places
- Common misplacements of familiar items
- Unable to follow some basic instructions

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## Types of Memory Loss

Dementia are basically categorized in four types; they are, Alzheimer's disease, Vascular Dementia, Lewy bodies and Frontotemporal Dementia. These four of types possibly account for 85% of all dementia.

The remaining dementias are relatively rare. They include neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, Progressive Supranuclear Palsy and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. Other relatively rare primary or secondary causes of dementia includes head injuries, brain tumours, subdural hematoma, Aids Dementia Complex, Neurosyphilis, Vitamin B12 and folate deficiency, alcohol and substance abuse, Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus and anoxic brain damage.

What these lists serve to highlight is that it is vitally important for the person diagnosed with dementia to understand what type of dementia they have. They are not all the same. Therefore, a diagnosis of dementia is not adequate in itself because it will not fully inform the person with dementia or the healthcare professionals looking after them.

It is true that a many patients would not accept a diagnosis from their doctor along the lines of "There is something wrong with your chest". This could mean almost anything. It could mean cancer, asthma, a chest infection, a pigeon chest, a broken bone or something else. Similarly, people diagnosed with dementia should push for a clear explanation of what type of dementia they have. For a doctor to offer a diagnosis of dementia without also explaining what type of dementia is involved is not normally acceptable. This is because such a fuzzy diagnosis does not really inform the person about what disease they have. Issues such as life expectancy, appropriate medications (if any) and pattern of decline all require a specific diagnosis. The following section will look at some specific types of dementia in some detail.

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## The Stages

Although there are different stages that the person undergo when suffering from dementia, it is important to stress here that all people are different. That the way dementia develops, be it Alzheimer's disease or vascular dementia, will thus be different for each person. Often clinicians will refer to the stages of dementia, with the person passing through these stages as the disease progresses. While this is often broadly true, they are not true for all people. What they are is simply a rule of thumb. They are not an exact description of what will happen to a given individual. Clearly, the stages of dementia can be useful as a guide. They can be useful as a basis for discussions between professionals, patients and family. Nevertheless, care needs to be taken in pointing out that they are only a broad brushstroke and flavor of what may be to come for many, but they are not a crystal ball. Deviations do happen from this model. Furthermore, these stages are based mostly on Alzheimer's disease progression. Their validity is less established for people with vascular dementia.

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## Pre-stage

Pre-stage is often disguise as some kind of forgetfulness in mild form. Many types of dementia can be extremely mild in the beginning. They can slowly creep on without people, including clinicians, noticing. Furthermore, there is some difficulty in defining just when dementia truly occurs. It is difficult to say exactly when a normal brain crosses over to an abnormal brain with dementia. There is no obvious line in the sand for people to cross. Consequently, the very earliest signs of dementia can often go unnoticed. Sometimes they are even wrongly ascribed to other causes.

What is clear is that at present clinicians have great difficulties in differentiating between the normal aging brain and the abnormal brain that will go on to develop full-blown dementia. Because of these difficulties, clinicians may identify a pre-stage of dementia or a halfway house between a normal brain and a truly abnormal one. This stage is descriptive in nature, rather than being aimed at identifying a specific dementia or disease.

A common description given to elderly patients that experience no major difficulties with their daily life, no significantly increased difficulties with planning or attention but do experience noticeably impaired memory is Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI).

MCI is typically more than the occasional memory loss that we will all experience from time to time, but this memory loss is also not enough to classify it as a full-blown dementia. Furthermore, this type of memory loss can have a number of underlying causes, just like dementia itself, rendering MCI a syndrome rather than a specific disease.

Because mild cognitive impairment is a syndrome, there have been several attempts to subdivide it into specific subtypes, such as amnestic and nonamnestic. However, research is still ongoing into how MCI should be subdivided. Consequently, most clinicians will simply refer to mild cognitive impairment rather than specific subgroups. One reason for this is that the validity of such subgroups is currently low. In addition, clinicians will need to learn more about MCI before they can talk about specific subtypes with the same degree of confidence that they do when talking about different types of dementia.



However, a substantial percentage of people with MCI will progress to full-blown dementia. Others may progress to other mental health conditions. Some studies have shown that 5 to 15 percent of people identified as having MCI will go on to develop dementia in each preceding year after the study.

However, this risk is not the same for everyone. For instance, people with an otherwise high risk of developing dementia with a label of MCI have a risk of up to fifteen per cent of developing dementia in each preceding year. For those with an otherwise low risk group of developing dementia but with the same label of MCI the risk is just five to ten per cent in each preceding year.

Nevertheless, many of these studies have only looked at people after a handful of years following their initial label of MCI. What is now needed is for more researchers to look at people with mild cognitive impairment over the longer term. This will then tell them if these risks holds true over many years, or just the years immediately after the initial MCI description was made.

The University of Leicester and Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust attempted to do just that. What they found was that the risk of developing dementia for people with the MCI label seemed to reduce slightly with time. They also suggested that these people are slightly less at risk of developing dementia than previously thought. Nevertheless, their figures are not that dissimilar to those already quoted in this book. What is also clear is that people with mild cognitive impairment do have a significantly increased risk of developing dementia, when compared to the general population. Although precisely what those risks are is still open to debate.

What constitutes appropriate medication for this group is also open to debate. Some Alzheimer's drug treatments, such as donepezil and rivastigmine may be beneficial for this group, but it is not always clear-cut. The word "may" needs to be stressed here, because some studies have also shown that they "may" be of limited effect in mild cognitive impairment cases. Clearly more research is required in this area to ascertain just how well these drugs really work on this group of people. It should also be realized that such medications are not cures for MCI. However, they may help to lessen some of the symptoms of the condition for a time.

Furthermore, these drugs will have side effects for some people. A balance will also need to be struck between the benefits of treatment and the risks of

adverse reactions and the negatives of clinical cost. Research is still ongoing in this area and the situation is likely to change in the future. Consequently, the best people placed to discuss these issues are normally the healthcare professionals involved with the patient at that point in time.

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## Early Stage

Some people often develop frequent forgetfulness in some degree. By this stage, the symptoms are more evident than in patients with Mild Cognitive Impairment. At this stage symptoms will frequently include forgetting new information and events, this symptom alone is often a red light to the healthcare professional to dig a little deeper and to start to consider amongst other things dementia as a possible cause. This is especially true in cases involving the older person.

Nevertheless, at this stage signs of the dementia are often still very mild, when compared to the later stages. As a result, early stage dementia can sometimes be mistaken wrongly for other things such as normal ageing, stress, MCI or depression.

Typical issues at this stage include increasing difficulty in understanding new concepts and ideas, increasingly forgetting conversations or events that have taken place relatively recently, but remembering events that have taken place a long time ago. They may also become increasingly muddled during conversations because they have forgotten what was said. They may repeat themselves during conversations because they cannot remember properly what they have already said.

Furthermore, they may show poor judgment in areas that they previously made sound judgments in, such as in personal budgeting and life choices. They may also find it increasingly difficult to make every day decisions. They may begin to isolate themselves from others.

Isolation may develop because of an increased reluctance to engage with new hobbies and interests. This could be because they may be reluctant do new things because they no longer grasp new things well; they do not wish to look stupid so they avoid situations where they may look stupid. If they look stupid then they may also feel stupid. Because of this, they may withdraw from the social activities that they have previously liked doing. They may also fail to initiate new ones. In addition, relationships may become strained because they may begin to accuse others of taking things, without permission, when what they have really done is mislaid these things.

At this stage, great care needs be taken in supporting the person's

independence, and to not smother them with kindness. Such smothering intentions, while often done with good intentions in mind, can have negative ramifications for the individual.

It should be realized that smothering the individual in this way is seldom productive and frequently counterproductive in terms of positive outcomes, such as self-esteem. The person is more likely to maintain their self-esteem if they are supported in their roles as an adult and not devalued in that role. Enormous care needs to be taken to support the individual with their cognitive deficits, while at the same time remembering that they are a cognitively impaired adult and not a child.

Clearly, maintaining self-esteem is important at all stages of dementia, but the risk of suicide is particularly high at the earlier stages, when the person is more fully aware of what is happening to them. When they are especially attentive of what may be ahead of them, as their condition develops. Consequently, maintaining self-esteem is perhaps especially important at this stage because maintaining self-esteem may help in reducing the risk of suicide in some people.

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## Middle Stage

This stage the symptoms became more evident. The person will be increasingly dependent on others for everyday tasks. Dementia will now be having a major impact upon the person's daily life. They may need repeated prompting to wash themselves and to dress themselves. They may need repeated prompting to eat and drink and to use the toilet. They will be moving towards a more dependent role. The loss of previous roles such as provider, leader, protector, career and worker may negatively affect the person's self-esteem.

Role reversals may be taking place between parent and child. The parent may now be the dependent and the recipient of care, rather than the giver of it. Family strain may become more evident. There is a risk that the caregivers will become depressed themselves as the dementia begins to truly take hold in their loved ones. Support for the caregivers is vitally important at this time because they will be faced with ever-increasing demands as the condition progresses in their relatives.

As the condition progresses, the person may become increasingly emotionally volatile or clingy. They may become depressed, even suicidal in some cases. They may cry and become upset more readily, they may become angry and even aggressive at times. Sometimes a previously placid person that was never aggressive may become aggressive towards their partner or career. This is probably due to complex issues such as brain damage, frustration with loss of independence and the ability and lack of training for the caregiver on how best to care for the individual with dementia.

Often family members try their best to care for their relative. Often they are let down by health care professionals. This is because techniques on how best to deal with the challenging situations and behaviors that they may have to face are never fully explained to the caregiver. Indeed, often relative education and support is sadly lacking in this area. It is lacking to such a degree that it is common for relatives to be unaware that there are even different types of dementia. It is often so lacking that many relatives do not know that dementia goes far beyond simple forgetfulness. It is often so lacking that relatives do not know that dementia can change the personality of the person with it.

Because of the personality and behavioral changes that may take place during the progression of dementia relatives can sometimes find that they are embarrassed in social situations. Antisocial and challenging behaviors may be evident in some people with dementia. However, unlike a person sitting in a wheelchair the disability related to dementia is not so obvious to the public or even to their close family. This can lead to others reacting inappropriately or even aggressively towards the demented person, often exasperating the situation even further.

Because of this, many family members often feel shame. They may apologize on the behalf of their relative for their relative's antisocial behaviors or for their relative's forgetfulness. They often ashamedly state that their relative was never like this before. Their apologies are often based upon a limited understanding of the dementia itself. This is partly because the changes in the brain are invisible to the naked eye.

Dementia, at least up until this stage, is a relatively invisible illness. This is because the changes are occurring within the person's brain. Consequently, people cannot see these changes in everyday life. The person with dementia may look perfectly normal to the person in the street, to their family members and even to many health care staff.

Nevertheless, the person with dementia may begin to behave out of character because of these abnormal changes in their brain. By this stage, they have a clearly abnormal brain. It is thus unfair to expect them to function as if they do not. That would be like expecting a one-armed person to function exactly as a two-armed person does.

The person with dementia may also begin to place themselves or others in danger or simply act oddly. People at this stage may experience hallucinations, have difficulty with perception and they may forget to light the gas fire. They may also go out at night in their nightwear or become unusually aggressive towards others. However, outwardly they may look just the same as they did before.

Their illness is in many cases physically invisible to others. Because of this comparative invisibility, there is often a lack of understanding by others, even in some cases compassion. Yet, the ways others interact with the person with dementia will have a direct impact on how well they cope with their illness. Sadly, within everyday life these interactions, because of limited knowledge

and insight, tend to make the matters worse rather than better.

Most people in everyday life would never dream of telling a person that is in a wheelchair to get up and walk. Nevertheless, this is in a way what happens when people try to treat people with advancing dementia as if they do not have brain damage and related cognitive issues. It is the invisibility of the condition that makes matters worse. Often people will not identify the condition. Sometimes people will feel that the person is just being awkward or difficult. Often people will feel that the demented person could do it if they really wanted to and so on. In the worse cases, people may confront the cognitive impairments and perhaps aggression of the person with dementia with aggression rather than understanding and compassion.

Because of such difficulties, there is a real danger that close family members may withdraw themselves and their relative from everyday social life. This is avoidance of negative situations and stimuli. This in the short term may produce positive results. However, in the longer term this will lead to risks of social isolation and a reduction in the social support network for the main career, and the person with dementia.

Thus, health care professionals normally recommend engaging in social situations, because over the longer term social isolation will only have a negative impact on the main career and the person with dementia.

Social isolation does not need to happen. What needs to happen is that such situations are managed, supported and controlled in an appropriate manner. One way to do this is for the health care professionals involved with the family to educate the family on how best to reduce and manage the risks involved, in an appropriate and person centered way. Another way is for the relatives to seek out the health care professional's advice and support. It is important that families should not simply wait for health care professionals to offer such advice of their own accord. This, in many cases, may be a very long wait indeed.

It is nevertheless the duty of the healthcare professionals to educate people about dementia. This includes the person with dementia themselves, their main career, other family members or friends and the public.

Dementia also needs to be discussed and debated more within families and society in general. It needs to become more visible and better understood by all. This understanding should include the fact that odd behaviors and

challenging behaviors are a part of dementia. Such issues are not a reflection of the person with the dementia, but rather a reflection of their abnormal brain. It is also a reflection on how others interact with them, often badly. Consequently, their out of character behavior is a reflection of them being ill. It is not a reflection of them being a bad person.



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## Late Stage

This stage are also known as advanced stage of dementia. By this time, they will have extreme difficulty in remembering things. They may no longer even remember or recognize their own partner. They may no longer remember or recognize their own children. They may even have forgotten their own names.

Just imagine how frightening it can be when you do not even know who you are, let alone where you are, where you should be, who you are talking to, if you are at home, in prison, if you are at work or if you homeless. Imagine how you would feel if you was hungry and thirsty and you did not know how to get food and drink. Imagine how you would feel if you had been a prisoner of war and you heard people, talking in a language that you could not understand. Imagine what it is like to not know if the next person to come to you will be a friend or an enemy. This is the reality of late stage dementia, for many. This is why family and health care workers need to be especially gentle and caring when dealing with people with advanced dementia, not brash and confrontational.

Nevertheless, even at this stage some people will have lucid periods. This is where things that they usually do not remember such as a relative's name comes back to them. However, these will sadly be momentary and increasingly rare and fleeting by this stage.

By this stage, they may believe that it is say 1986, when it is in fact decades later. They may also believe that their dead relatives are still alive because they cannot recall their relative's death. Consequently, they may ask to see their dead relatives believing that they are still alive, perhaps a dead child or parent. This can sometimes cause distress to all involved. If relatives react by telling them that this person is dead, the person with dementia may react to this information as if this death just occurred. To them they are hearing this information for the first time. Conversely, by this stage some people will be so advanced in their dementia that they will show no insight into what is being said to them at all.

They may not even show much awareness of their surroundings or of their family sitting next to them. When this occurs, there is a risk that family

contact becomes empty, because it is always one way. This can make visiting, such as in a care home especially demanding. In such cases, the staff on duty should go out of their way to help the relative feel comfortable and relaxed. They should engage in small talk and perhaps offer them refreshment.

By this time, the person with dementia may not know where they are, why they are there and so they may perpetually think that they have just arrived, when in fact this is not the case. They may repeatedly ask how to go home, even when they are home. This is because they are remembering a previous home, such as their childhood home.

It is important to remember that they may not remember the passing years so well. Consequently, they may think that they are much younger than they actually are. It is not that uncommon for a person in their 90s to think that they are in fact in their forties. This is important because people need to see the world through the dementing person's eyes. People need to see the world from their perspective. For example, what home did they live in their forties. Do they wish to go there when they ask to go home? Alternatively, do they just want somebody to tell them that they have a bed for the night and that they will not be thrown out alone on to the street in the dark.

Similarly, it is common for patients in nursing homes with this condition to believe that they have just arrived, when in fact they have been living in the nursing home for months or even years. Likewise, staff that have attended to their care and nursing needs for this period may to the dementing person be complete strangers to them. They may believe that they have never seen that person before. They are increasingly unlikely to even recognize the role of the carer or nurse, let alone the individual person themselves, and consequently they may become resistive to care.

Because of this, care and nursing interventions need to be supported by repeatedly orientating the person to the role of the carer or nurse, where possible. This needs to be done every time the intervention takes place, and throughout the intervention. This repeating of information is important because it seems that it is incredibly difficult by this stage for new information to be retained for any length of time. Indeed, some patients may have memory retention measured in just seconds or in the most advanced cases not even measurable at all. Many patients will become easily restless or challenging by this stage.

The person may also become increasingly agitated and restless, as the day gets darker. This is termed sun downing. If the person is mobile then they may start to walk about in an agitated or searching state. Careers need to plan for this. For example, medication can be timed to coincide with this period, redirecting and occupation based methods may be planned and implemented. If careers can understand why the person is behaving in this manner then care can be more person-centered and focused.

For example, if an elderly dementing person needs to go out because they are going to pick their children up from school (they do not remember the passing years so they think that their children are still at school) then tell them that their partner is picking them up today. Using their partner's name and the names of their children will help reassure the person with dementia that everything is okay. This is why it is important for careers to understand the life history of the person with dementia and to see the world from the dementing person's perspective.

By this stage, the person will be dependent upon nursing care, either at home or in a nursing home. They will need help with feeding. They may have developed swallowing problems, and consequently be at risk of aspiration. Many will require thickener in their drinks and a soft or pureed diet to help combat aspiration based issues. They may have increasing difficulty maintaining their own weight; weight loss is common by this stage.

About ten percent will have epilepsy (compared to about one percent of the general population). What's more, they may become increasingly incontinent. They may become incontinent of urine, feces, or both. They will become more prone to urinary tract infections. They may also become chair or bed bound. They may need specialized chairs, such as bucket-chairs, to stop them sliding out of their chair and onto the floor. They will increasingly be at risk of pressure sores. They may need specialized mattresses to reduce this risk.

They will increasingly become impoverished of language and in the end may only speak a handful of words, or not speak at all. Communication may be restricted to gestures, body language and facial expressions or in the most advanced cases it may not be present at all.

They may also interact poorly with other people, they may invade people's space, they may grab at other people or become aggressive when tired, anxious or unable to understand what is happening to them.

They may feel easily threatened by others during personal care, such as washing, because they do not understand what is happening to them. However, a gentle, caring and understanding approach can help reduce such occasions of aggression. Other things that may help include relaxing music, gentle unhurried pace, lots of positive facial expressions from the caregiver, medication for behavioral issues, returning to the person when they are more settled and simply talking gently to the person and smiling.

They may also develop consecutive infections, such as chest infections. Many of them will die from these infections. The flu vaccination, is normally, recommended for elderly people with dementia, because of the risk of death or serious illness if they contract the flu. Others will die from multi-organ failure, heart attacks, stroke or something else. In the end, the person may become so ill that the care is refocused on a palliative care model of caring. By this time the person, if the condition runs its full course, is highly likely to die in bed. They will be doubly incontinent. They will be unable to talk. They will be on a pressure-relieving mattress to prevent bedsores, 24 hours a day. They will be extremely weak. They will be unable to move their own body. They will be most or totally unaware of their surroundings.

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## **Brain Improvement in people with Dementia**

Brain improvement is commonly mentioned in conjunction with dementia. There is ongoing research into whether dementia can be off-set, or even cured, by brain training. However, the positive link between brain training and increased mental activity gives scientists a lot of hope that it will at least have a positive effect on people who may suffer from dementia in later life. This is heightened by the fact that there seems to be a link between Alzheimer's and lower levels of education.

Although the positive effects of brain training have yet to be scientifically proved, all the evidence that is available to date suggests that there is every reason to start training your brain. It won't change you as a person, nor will it make you more intelligent, but it could just help you get things done a lot more efficiently.

# Chapter 4: Foods for Better Memory

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## Diet and Your Brain

What you eat greatly affects how your brain works. As the saying goes an empty stomach is an empty mind. Perhaps, one of the most important and most controllable factors in brain health is your diet. What you ingest can either support or destroy cells. It is important to realize that you can lose millions of brain cells every day due to poor eating habits and lack of proper nutrition. But it is also possible to grow new cells, neurons, and synapses once nutritional needs are met. And when this happens, you will notice a corresponding rise in mental performance and feel better across the board.

Choosing foods that have a positive rather than a negative impact on your brain takes a conscious effort, but it's not difficult. Asking your brain to continue running at its optimal potential without giving it the nutritional support it needs is like asking your car to run without oil. Eventually, parts will wear out, and the car won't run. The origin of many brain disorders, outside of infection, genetics, and trauma, is predominantly dietary. Even something as simple as a lack of vitamin B1 can cause serious damage to the thalamus and hypothalamus, resulting in loss of mental activity and, in severe cases, lead to coma and death.

How certain foods or lack of certain nutrients negatively impacts your brain will give you an important understanding about which foods to limit or avoid and which are vital for brain health.

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## What to eat

What to eat to improve your memory varies greatly depending on your needs. There are a variety of everyday, natural foods that can boost your brain power and provide your mind with the best possible nutrition. In this section you'll learn how free range eggs can keep you sharp as a tack, and why fresh salmon is far more beneficial than its farm-raised counterpart. We'll also tell you how blueberries can ward off Alzheimer's disease, and why spinach is ideal for those who are trying to flex their "mind muscles."

There are well known health benefits publicly popularized for Fish Oils. From enhanced heart health to a decreased risk of stroke, physicians everywhere are touting the many miracles that oily fish can offer. There is possibly an even more advantageous reason for consuming fish such as salmon and herring though. Believe it or not, these aquatic delicacies can also increase healthy brain function.

The B vitamins are the most important essential nutrients for helping to keep your mind sharp. Your body uses B vitamins to turn food into mental energy and to manufacture and repair brain tissue, so deficiencies in thiamin, niacin, vitamin B6, and B12 can all cause mental dysfunction. Low levels of boron have been shown to contribute to a decrease in electrical activity in the brain as well as impaired hand-eye coordination, which require explicit signals from the brain.

Fish Oils are known to contain essential fatty acids such as Omega-3 fatty acids. It's been found that including adequate amounts of these essential ingredients in your diet can reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease and can lower your chances of developing brain health issues by up to 26%. This is especially true if you prepare the fish by steaming or baking, rather than frying. Oily fish can also improve your memory and decrease the risk of memory loss in general.

Aside from salmon, trout, and herring, here are just a few of the other oily fish that you'll want to pick up when you're at the seafood counter this week:

Fresh Tuna (avoid tossing the canned tuna into your shopping cart, as it rarely contains the health benefits that are synonymous with oily fish)

Drinks are one of the trickiest aspects of eating healthy. What we have learned throughout our lives might not be as accurate as we once believed. Ask the average person and they are likely to tell you milk and fruit juices are healthy. Luckily, most people understand soda is the worst of all beverage choices, but too few realize that fruit juices can be nearly as dangerous and that milk might also cause a threat.

The average fruit juice is packed with sugar. Some juices feature only natural sugars. The important thing to know about these natural juices is that they are not low calorie or diet foods, but they are convenient substitutes when you cannot eat regular fruit. Fruit juices that are made purely from fresh fruit and no added ingredients are healthy alternatives when eating a piece of whole fruit is not an option.

Unfortunately, not all fruit juices are made the same and marketing can fool even the savviest of shoppers. Fruit juices containing anything other than pure fruit are likely packed with added sugar. There might also be dyes and preservatives included in the drinks. When choosing fruit juices, which should be consumed sparingly, you should read the ingredient label closely and opt for juices made only from pure fresh fruit.

Another problematic beverage is the sports drink. These drinks are intended to help people rebalance electrolytes and rehydrate, particularly after intense physical activity. Unfortunately, the average person consuming sports drinks is not participating in intense activity. And worse, these drinks also contain dyes and other dangerous ingredients. A healthy alternative to sports drinks is coconut water.

Coconut water is a natural alternative to sports drinks, soda, and other sugar-laden beverages. Those who do not like the taste of pure water or who want to mix up their flavours a bit should try coconut water. It has a sweet, slightly meaty taste and can be flavoured with natural fruit juices for something different. In addition to tasting great, it is packed with health benefits.

The reason coconut water is such a great alternative to sports drinks is because it is packed with electrolytes. The purpose of sports drinks after physical activity is to rehydrate and rebalance the body's cells. Coconut water contains magnesium, potassium, sodium, calcium, and phosphorous. Each of these plays an important role in our bodies, so keeping them in balance is necessary for good health. Coconut water helps you do this without



preservatives or excess calories, making it a healthy choice.

Coconut water has also been proven to lower blood pressure by as much as 70%. People suffering from high blood pressure can drink coconut water first thing in the morning to replenish after a night of not eating. This balances electrolytes and keeps blood pressure in check all day. Coconut water is also low in sugar and contains no high fructose corn syrup. Coconut water helps improve the health of your skin from the inside out and helps heal acne scars. It is a great choice for people who want to lose weight because it is low in calories and contains a lot of fibre. There is also evidence that coconut water is beneficial for curing and preventing kidney stones, balancing pH in blood, treating cholera, preventing acid reflux, aiding digestion, improving circulation, and boosting the immune system. There are even instances in which coconut water was given intravenously as a quick fix for dehydration.

Pomegranate juice is an excellent alternative to other high sugar, processed fruit juices. It is important to choose pomegranate juice that is natural. If possible, prepare your own from pomegranates and mix with other pure fruit juice, such as blueberry or apple. It can also be blended with sparkling water for a carbonated soda alternative.

Pomegranate juice does contain a lot of natural sugar, so health experts recommend drinking it in combination with a salad or oatmeal. However, pomegranate does not cause blood sugar to spike like some sugars, so you do not have to worry about the increase and the plummet. It is a great juice alternative for diabetics, as long as they do not overdo it.

In addition to being a great alternative to other fruit juices and soda, pomegranate juice offers a variety of health benefits. Many health experts consider pomegranate a powerful cancer fighter. Studies show pomegranate juice is capable of destroying breast cancer cells and possibly preventing them from forming in the first place. There is also evidence that it may inhibit the growth of lung cancer cells and prostate cancer. It also keeps PSA levels stable. Studies show men undergoing prostate cancer treatment needed less treatment when consuming pomegranate juice during the course of their treatment.

In addition to prevention of cancer, pomegranate juice also prevents cartilage deterioration, plaque build-up in the arteries, and Alzheimer's disease. Studies have shown it lowers LDL and raises HDL cholesterol, and lowers

blood pressure by about 5%. Consumption while pregnant protects the neonatal brain during development and there is even evidence pomegranate juice prevents dental plaque build-up. Incidentally, this prevention of dental plaque likely coincides with the prevention of plaque in the arteries, since many studies show a link between heart disease and plaque build-up. What reduces one type of plaque in the body often helps other plaque-related issues.

Green tea is one of the healthiest beverages you can drink and people should be drinking it every single day. Green tea contains caffeine, so those sensitive to the stimulant will not want to overdo it. However, if you have been drinking coffee for years and you are looking for a caffeinated alternative, you cannot find a better choice than green tea. (Black tea does contain caffeine and it has a number of health benefits, as do all teas, but green is the king of healthy teas).

Green tea is one of the few foods that even the most sceptical of Western medicine practitioners can agree is a natural health miracle. It is filled with antioxidants. Antioxidants search for and eliminate free radicals from the body. Free radicals play a role in the development of cancer, blood clots, and atherosclerosis. There are many sources of antioxidants, but green tea is one of the best. It undergoes minimal processing, so the antioxidants are more concentrated than other teas.

There is some debate over how much green tea is enough. Studies conducted in Asia show higher consumption levels are ideal. One study that included 500 Japanese women with breast cancer showed that green tea consumption reduced the risk of recurrence. Chinese studies have shown similar results with stomach, prostate, pancreatic, oesophageal, and colorectal cancers. A study including patients with a high risk of lung cancer showed that high consumption of specifically green tea reduced the risk of cancer development by nearly 20%.

Green tea is great for heart health and is the perfect beverage for those with a desire to lose weight. It is a low calorie drink and a diuretic. Some dieters choose green tea supplements, but the best option is drinking pure green tea. The liquid gives you a feeling of fullness and flushes your system of toxins and water retention. Make sure you are choosing pure green tea beverages when shopping because there are products on the market proclaiming the benefits of tea, but loaded with sugar or artificial sweeteners.

Though you do not want to overdo it with fruit juices, it is easy to see why fresh, unprocessed, unaltered fruit juices are a great alternative to juices and other beverages containing high fructose corn syrup. Green tea is also a great alternative and you are free to drink as much as you like. If you want to enjoy a flavourful beverage in addition to the eight glasses of water you should drink every day, and you are interested in consuming beverages that offer a myriad of health benefits, consider one of these alternatives.

The concept of grass-fed beef is a revived concept. Historically, farmers and livestock owners allowed their cattle to graze in order to obtain nourishment; however, a more industrialized livestock feeding methodology became prevalent a number of decades ago. It has been only in the past 20 years or so that farmers began shifting back to the traditional livestock feeding habits and offering their cattle more natural food alternatives, as demand for better, tastier, and more vitamin-rich beef has grown. Rather than giving them corn and grain as their main dietary staple, they are now letting them roam the pastures and eat the grass that they would normally consume if they were in the wild. While this may not seem like a particularly ground-breaking idea, it has given us humans the chance to eat more nutritious beef and reap the rewards that come along with it.

Grass fed beef contains higher levels of omega 3 fatty acids, as well as other essential nutrients and vitamins, like Vitamin E and CLA (which is a good fat). According to studies that were conducted at the University of Maryland Medical Center, the omega-3 fatty acids that are found in grass-fed beef can guard the brain, prevent inflammation, and provide our bodies with a wide range of other health benefits, such as lowering the risk of developing certain cancers. Due to the fact that grass-fed cattle consume substantial amounts of grass and plants, which are high in omega 3 fatty acids, this essential nutrient is then passed on to those who opt for grass fed beef.

Still not convinced that grass fed beef is better for your brain? Well, it's even been shown that grass fed cattle has a higher omega ratio. Grain and corn fed cows only have an omega ratio 6:3 ratio of 20:1. That means for every 20 grams of Omega 6 there is 1 gram of Omega 3. That's not a lot.

On the other hand, grass fed cattle typically have an omega 6:3 ratio of 0.16:1. So with grass fed beef you are getting much more of the beneficial omega 3s. Grass fed beef also contains a reduced amount of saturated fats compared to corn and grain feed beef.

The primary reason why the omega ratio is so important boils down to the enzymes that are used to convert the types of fatty acids. Both Omega 3 and Omega 6 utilize the same enzyme to produce compounds. However, while the Omega 3 fatty acids are converted in beneficial, anti-inflammatory compounds when they come into contact with elongate and desaturase enzymes, Omega 6 fatty acids are turned into potentially harmful, pro-inflammatory compounds. Therefore, it's important to eat foods that are lower in Omega 6 and contain greater Omega 3 levels, in order to avoid negatively impacting the brain's cells and tissues.

Yet another key reason for incorporating grass fed beef into your diet is the fact that it has significant amounts of iron. A study found that women who consumed adequate amounts of iron were able to complete tasks more quickly when asked to carry out mental exercises. This is because iron enables easy transport of oxygen throughout the body and allows for oxygen-rich blood to reach the brain.

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## **Foods to Avoid**

Everyone knows there are healthy foods and junk foods, but not as many people realize the effects these bad foods are actually having on our health. Making matters worse, there are a lot more junk foods out there than most people know. Foods mistakenly viewed as wholesome or appropriate to eat on a regular basis actually contain ingredients that are destroying our health.

To change your eating habits and improve your health with food, you must first understand what is causing you damage. Obviously, candy and cookies and chips are high on the list. These are commonly accepted as junk food and provide your body no nourishment. Not only are they junk food, they are filled with chemicals and preservatives that damage the body's cells. The junk foods we knew were harming us are causing even more damage than we realized.

Even small amounts of alcohol can cause damage to cells in the part of the brain responsible for memory and cognition. Alcohol is considered poison to the brain, so even if you're doing everything else right, alcohol will cause a decline in cognitive function and can significantly deplete thiamine (vitamin B1) levels.

High glycemic foods cause sugar surges in the blood, and few foods produce as much of a surge in blood glucose as those made with refined flour and sugar.<sup>2</sup> Foods that are easily and quickly digested saturate the bloodstream with glucose and stimulate a surge in insulin, all of which causes inflammation and cellular destruction. The brain has no pain receptors, so we can't feel inflammation in the brain the way we can with arthritis or an injury to the body.

In addition to known junk foods, many of the foods we consider healthy and wholesome contain these same chemicals and preservatives. Nobody thinks of bread, ketchup, peanut butter, juice, milk, cereal, or meat as junk food, but in many cases that is exactly what it is. Some foods start out harmless, but the manufacturers' effort to lengthen its shelf life or lower its cost damages the product. Other foods are actually not foods at all. They are developed in a lab, made to look, taste, and feel like familiar foods, and packaged and marketed to the public as perfectly safe. People serve these foods to their

family everyday assuming they are nutritious and wholesome food options, but nothing could be further from the truth.

If you are ready to make changes in your diet and embark on a new, healthier lifestyle, your journey must first begin by learning about ingredients. To create a diet that will aid your body in growing stronger and healthier, you must read food labels and understand what foods promote health and what foods tear apart your body. Once you understand the ingredients that are damaging your body the most, you can begin to make changes and eliminate these dangerous foods.

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## **The Importance of Balance Diet**

Balancing your diet is an integral part of improving your brain health and memory enhancement. Sometimes changing your perspective is the best way to improve your diet and your overall health. Instead of viewing changes as painful and focused on elimination, look at them from a different point of view. See the changes as an opportunity to add new things to your diet. Eliminating dangerous foods prevents disease, but adding food can do just as much good. Some foods boost health and actually interfere with the development or progression of diseases. When you view your lifestyle changes from a place of adding abundance and health to your diet, it will be easier to cope with the difference.

It is also important to note that adding foods to your diet makes it easier to eliminate the bad stuff. When you load up your menu with healthy, beneficial food, there is less room left on your plate and in your stomach for the unhealthy food. Your focus is on trying new things and you feel full, so you rarely worry about all of the foods you are giving up or no longer enjoying.

If necessary, make your changes gradually. Jumping into something new can backfire. It is better to make small changes over time and stick with them than to jump in and revamp your entire diet, only to return to the same poor eating habits in a month or two. There are no rules about changing your diet, as long as you are always moving in the direction of health. Even small changes can help you in the long-run, so no matter how long it takes, be patient with your body and with your tastes. Slow, gradual change is always better than no change at all.

So, where do you begin when you are ready to make diet changes? It can be tempting to rush out to the supermarket and restock your pantry with all new healthy foods. If you are this motivated, go for it! Just make sure you do not over buy and get stuck tossing a bunch of foods. Remember, fresh, unprocessed foods have a shorter shelf life than many of the foods you are giving up. Buy only enough for a few days or a week so you do not waste food.

If you are overwhelmed by all of the choices you can add to your healthier eating plan, you should begin with a few sample foods. It takes time to learn

about healthy foods and figure out how to prepare these healthy options, so take your time. You can begin with these foods and build from here. Incorporating the following foods into your new style of eating gives you a great base from which to begin your healthy foods journey.



# Chapter 5: Concentration and Forgetfulness

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## What is Concentration?

Concentration is a vital part of cognitive process. Focusing on one point, visualizing the object, recalling the past conversations and memorizing the things in a few minutes is all just because of the concentration. So, Concentration is the act of fixing an attention on one object or thing and discarding the surrounding's happenings. Concentration is all about the power of focus. If someone has good focus ability, then he would automatically have good concentration power as well; though, focus ability and concentration power are interrelated.

Engrossed for remembering the perceived information is the major factor of concentration. Besides distractions and disturbance in processing the information, the person's own level of saturation is very important. As it is the rule of nature, that every individual is different from each other whether in facial features or perspectives; so, how come concentration ability could be same for everyone. It is different, that's why you can memorize some objects quickly while others can't.

The area of interest is also important, because the choice of hobbies and hierarchy of habit is entirely dissimilar for everyone. Some people don't need to put too much effort for memorizing anything about their favorite topic in a fraction of minutes, but they may spend hours and hours to memorize a single paragraph of the book or any main point due to the disliking of the topic, this shows the concentration level is directly depends on the person's interested and indirectly depends on the uninterested objects. The greater the concentration on interested topic, the quicker memorization about the related topic and the more concentration on uninterested object, the more delayed learning process of the information. So, the concentration is not only depends on your mind's perceiving information capacity and ability; actually, it is the

whole environment around you involves in maintaining and achieving proper attention.

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## **Factors in Concentration**

There are many factors that affects concentration. Environment and daily routine do play vital role in increasing or decreasing the concentration; rather by distracting from the target or introducing disturbances in focusing the object. After all, you are living with your own scheduled routine and surroundings are unavoidable, but extraction of desired stimuli is difficult for concentrating on it and gives the appropriate response. By making small alterations in your daily routine and avoiding the unnecessary objects from the surrounding could be helpful in gaining the power of concentration over a short period of time.

### **CLATTERS**

Noise is one of the major factor in concentration. When trying to concentrate on an object or things, many noises are like friends of yours and others behaving like an enemy. Sometimes, the people couldn't pay their attention on the ongoing conversations and would confuse, if someone speak loudly in front of them, that'll unintentionally produce disturbance for the person to focus the object or to catch the conversation from the point left behind.

But some conversations are assistors in accomplishing the task, like learning by loud voices and listening the lesson verbally from anyone could easily help them to memorize the main point. Dealing with noise distracters isn't a big problem; there is a solution for every problem.

### **Visualizations**

Visualization are also vital factor in concentration. Most of the people have the power of memorizing images rapidly while some others take more time to learn tracts and images. All this happens due to the concentration power, the little effort of concentration on the image could help in immediate capture of the object including the colors, styles and fonts in it, but it might confuse the others, whether they can only remember the color or style of the image.

Scientists also discovered that the tracts and directions are very simple to

learn for some people by just randomly looking around while walking or sitting in a vehicle but others can forget the same route even walking by it daily.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

Some people are known to concentrate easily depends on the environment they are into. The greater the environment is quiet and calm, the more focus can be paid for the targeted task but if the environment is too noisy and distractions are continuous, the concentration would be broken constantly. For that reason, calm environment is more relaxing because it enables to memorize without coping with the interrupting disturbances. However, studies also revealed that the intelligent people could efficiently deal with the irritant environment as compared to the calm environment due to the well trained concentration ability and power.

## **Unorganized Lifestyle**

Clutters and disorganized lifestyle affects the person to concentrate. Perhaps, it could lessen the power of focus or strength to fix attention on any targeted object. The unsynchronized living won't also leave an impact on the concentration but overall it is a bad cup of tea. Unsynchronized daily routine could influence your mood and behavior too. Organizing your lives into a proper routine is very important for accomplishing each target of lives; either it is paying attention or succession of aims.

## **Unhealthy Lifestyle**

Unhealthy lifestyle such as excessive drinking and unbalanced diet affects brain performance thus making concentration more difficult to achieve. Fizzy drinks and high carbohydrate diet are dangerous not only for your health but also for the memory and brain. Researchers discovered that the person eating the glucose rich substances in your diet can be the cause of brain function impairment on future. Smoking and alcohol abuse are one of the leading causes of altered concentration nowadays and the incidence is increasing day by day. But preventive measures can be helpful for dealing with the

concentration impairing problems. You can't realize it in a daily routine, but the effects will start on when the unfriendly diet is increased.

## **Breakfast is the most Essential Meal of the Day**

Breakfast is the most essential meal of the day. While skipping breakfast, anyone couldn't realize that what the disastrous impact is leaving on their vital organs and systems. It is rightly said to eat breakfast like a king, eat lunch like a common man and eat dinner like a beggar, after waking up in the morning, our brain needs sufficient glucose to compete with the daily requirements of the nutrients and essentials, so boosting with the healthy breakfast is very important to spend the whole day efficiently and achieve the success in every task. For paying quicker concentration, your brain should be supplied with the full minerals and vitamins that we can get it by not skipping the breakfast.

## **Rehydration**

Water is the most essential liquid in our body. Almost 70% of our body is made of water especially our brain. Drinking less water or natural fruit juices is one of the major causes of dehydration. Significantly, our body needs more water than the other essentials. So, if the quantity of water is not enough, our body's chief organs including brain, heart and kidneys will ultimately start dropping down and create an interruption while putting attention on the stimulus. Water is like a fuel for our body, if it isn't provided on time, the body will show bizarre response.

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## **Difficulties in Concentration**

When trying to concentrate completely or engrossed in the targeted object, specific hurdles occurs that break the rhythm of concentration and eventually, you are unable to fix your mind's attention in one direction. Some people may overcome the rhythm and give the new start of the target rather others move here and there and forgetting totally about what they are actually doing or intended to do. Common issues are:

### **Full Memory**

Don't you know that our brain has a certain capacity to hold and sometimes its storage get full? The ability to retain certain facts and recalling depends on the interactions of the neurons that your brain creates. But at certain point sometimes, it seems like you can't do more things or don't have the power to handle the big problems right away. It is just because of your absorbance capacity is full and now your brain needs some rest by easily leaving the task for a while. This issue is commonly seen in the student life when the study is prolonged and brain is bored from reading or learning about one thing constantly.

There is a limit set for each processing information in our brains, if we overuse it, the result will be end up by understanding nothing and just wasting the time. So, try to take a break from heavy study topics and review it to restore the energy of mind.

### **Interest is everything.**

Interest play a vital role in focusing on a particular objects or topics. The least the interest, the more focus should be paid to the topic. This is the human psychology that the stuff or topic which he doesn't like will ultimately show the disinterest towards it. It's quite difficult to be attentive in the lecture, presentation or even in the meetings, if the topic is boring; so, for dealing with this situation, you should say stop to combat it, try to focus on the topic as much as you can. Keep a notepad with you and write important points in it,

it'll assist in maintaining the concentration throughout the meeting or lecture.

## **Daydreaming**

Day dreaming is a common occurrence when people found a specific topic less interesting. Usually, people start the day dreaming when sitting in front of the books and papers, and completely leaving the topic behind due to the interruption of future planning. The dreaming should be halted by reviewing yourself and preparing yourself to complete it as early as possible.

Motivate yourself by gratifying yourself that the day dreaming could be done another time and right now, the concentration over the topic is more important rather than making the strategies for achieving future success.

## **Distracted Mind**

An idle mind is a playground of the devil as the popular saying goes. The aimless and abrupt thoughts are like the alarm bells when putting every effort in understanding and learning the topic. Suddenly, start thinking about the irrelevant thing and step ahead on the unrelated path are the common mistakes which we do in everyday living. But if this becomes serious issue and willing to get rid of it then try to be back at the point where you end up your concentration and limit yourself on focusing the topic.

## **Confusion**

Some words or events can cause as to wonder our thought and confuse minds to concentrate on a particular subject. While reading a book, confusions may occur and it will make distractions in the concentration of the topics or conversations. Some people start irrelevant conversation or may give you the entirely different answer in response to the question, it is due to the previous confusions would interrupt in replying the questions or the mind is not present over there, thus getting not a single point.

Vagueness is very common in studying the difficult and time consuming topic; for dealing with these attributes, the will power is important and try to encourage yourself to keep concentration in tempo.

## **Lack of Trust**

Trust is like a precious mirror that when it is broken it cannot be mended. Some people don't keep trust and believe in themselves and ultimately find difficulty in every task. Usually they end up like saying I can't do this, this is really difficult for me, am I able to do this? So, all these sentences show the lacking of confidence of achieving any task. A large numbers of individuals are also found who starts worrying before the exams or presentations; the result is self-doubt and eventually, concentration power impaired thus facing the failures in the targeted tasks.

“Recently study was conducted in the California University that the distractions usually start after the 15 minutes of focus and the major culprits were smart phones and laptops.”



# Chapter 6: Improve your Concentration

Improving your concentration can be tricky but fun at the same time. To improve your focus essentially means that you are strengthening your brain's capacity to work for longer periods of time without getting distracted. Obviously, this means that mental exercises are an integral part of any attempt to improve your focus and concentration. In principle, they are very similar to normal physical exercises. Like any normal exercise, you will have to keep working at them diligently to make yourself more capable. For instance, when you are trying to tone up your muscles, you will have to do it over a period of time. The first day is the hardest – your muscles will ache and you will feel extra tired after your exercise. But as the days go by, your muscles will develop the elasticity and strength needed to stretch the way you want them to and before you know it, you are in brilliant shape!

Similarly, you perform the following mental exercises regularly and over time, your mental acumen will also become sharper. Your ability to focus and your attention span will improve. But this is not exactly a walk in the park. For them to be any effective, you must perform them regularly and diligently, with total commitment. The first few days maybe hard and you may actually develop headaches if you push yourself too hard. Take it slow and do not force yourself to everything at once. Be patient and build your endurance up over time.

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## Meditate

Meditation are known to sharpen concentration. Meditation is the practice of training the mind to become calm and silent. It isn't necessarily easy and many people find it hard to stick at it, but if you do, you will quickly see the benefits.

To meditate, you simply need to find a few minutes in your day when you can be quiet and know that you won't be distracted. Find a position that is comfortable for you – many people sit to meditate, but there is no reason why you can't lie down if you prefer. Simply slow you're breathing down and start to relax your muscles. If you find that your mind is starting to race again, try to concentrate on your breathing and how your body is feeling. In time, you will find that you can empty your mind – but it may take many sessions before that happens naturally. Stick with it, because you will reap the rewards with increased meditation given long enough.

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## Counting Words

This sound stupid but this one works very well. Counting the words in an article is an exercise that is a time tested is pick up a newspaper, select an article and count the number of words in it. Now there is only one condition that you have to follow; you should not use your fingers to one. And it is mighty effective too. What you have to do track and count. The complete exercise should be performed by tracking the words with your eyes. Once you are finished with one article, move on to the next one.

This can be done using magazines too! However, the efficacy of this method depends on how the articles are arranged. In a newspaper, various articles are of various sizes and lengths and this poses a challenge to your mind. In a magazine the degree of variation is much lesser. Books should be avoided altogether since the words will be arranged in neat paragraphs and hence counting will be easy.

Remember to pick magazines and articles where the font is of a good size. If it is too small, it will hurt your eyes and if it is too big, then the counting becomes easy, reducing the effectiveness of the exercise. Also, make sure you do not strain yourself too much. Do not read in dim light or you spoil your eyesight and make sure to take regular breaks in between counting or you may end up with a bad headache.

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## Relaxation

Take time to relax your mind and it will give you the focus you are looking for. You may find it hard to concentrate simply because you do too much all in one go. If you have a huge project to complete at work, for example, you can only do so much at one time. The best way to attack a project like this without burning yourself out is to break up the project into mini-projects. Then spend a certain amount of time on each mini-project before you take a break.

It is unlikely that you will be able to concentrate well for longer than half an hour at a time, so aim to take a break after half an hour, even if it is only to get up and stretch. After three or four blocks of half an hour, take a decent break of at least 20 minutes. You can use the same strategy to break up your working day, whether you are in the office, outside, or at home. Have your list of things to do and work through them systematically, making sure you take regular breaks.

Don't wait until you are aware that your concentration isn't working; take a break long before then or you will find yourself too tired to do anything worthwhile.

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## Count your Numbers Backward

Make your counting a challenging one by trying this test. From counting of words in a book, we go into counting of numbers. The exercise sounds simple enough, but do not allow yourself to be fooled! Once you start performing this exercise, you will come to know how difficult it actually is to count back. What you essentially do is count backwards in your mind. Start by counting backwards from 100. To increase the difficulty, you can skip a fixed number of digits and then count. For instance, 100, 97, 94, 91, etc. it is hard enough counting backwards in order; counting like that, purposely skipping digits becomes even more difficult! You can keep increasing the difficulty level, in fact. For instance, once you find it easy to count both backwards and count with skipping fixed numbers, try counting all the prime numbers within 100 from the back. Or you could try counting down the multiples of 2, then 3 and then 5 and so on and so forth. This way, you keep challenging yourself; you are not just reciting random numbers that have become ingrained in your brain.

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## Organize

Organizing your thought gives you the power to control your mind and learn to focus on a particular subject. When you get up, decide on the most important chores for the day and aim to get them over with first. If you leave them until later in the day, the chances are that you will be too tired to concentrate on them properly and that you have spent much of the day worrying about getting them done while you complete other, less important, tasks.

The only reason not to get a major task over with first thing in the morning is if you know you don't work well until you've had chance to wake up properly. In that case, leave it until later in the morning and get more mundane tasks out of the way first.

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## **Water Exercise**

Water can be your aid to make your concentration sharp as it best. This is again a very deceptively simple exercise that can work wonders for your level of concentration and focus. The procedure is to fill a glass with water up to the half level. Now, sit on a chair and hold the glass in the flat palm of an extended arm. Look closely at the water level so that you can notice ripples on the surface caused by the slight tremors of the hand. Count the number of ripples you can see; this in itself will help you focus more.

Now try to see if you calm yourself enough and concentrate on the glass really hard, trying to keep your hand from moving too much. Keep doing that and you will find that the number of ripples within the surface of the water diminishes!

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## Work out

High intensity exercises increase the brain volume and increase the blood flow to the brain enhancing the ability to fix all the thoughts in one direction or the target. The benefits of exercise are touted everywhere, but it is amazing how few people take the time to get any proper exercise. It can help with a variety of ailments, but Harvard researchers have also shown that exercise can help with cognitive functions, such as memory and concentration.

When you exercise to a moderate level, your brain is stimulated to release a chemical called brain-derived neurotropic factor. You can't take a pill to release these chemicals, only exercise will do it, so it's time to put your exercise clothes on and get some exercise.



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## Shapes Exercises

Did you know that you can use shapes to sharpen your concentration? This is another difficult exercise. In fact, this is indeed one of the toughest exercises of this list. Let us look at the procedure. First, take a clean sheet of paper and draw a geometrical figure on it. Let it be any figure, such as a circle or a square or a rectangle. Make sure that the figure you draw is not very big. It should be small to medium in size occupying way less than one-fourths of the space on the paper. Now, fill the figure with some bright colour such as dark blue or yellow or red. After that begins the real exercise. Look at the figure with utmost concentration and try to visualize only the outline of the figure in your mind, while effectively blocking out the colour.

As you can imagine, this is extremely difficult. We are hardwired to pick out colours even before shapes. To most people, what jumps out first in any situation is the bright colour – instead of black and white, it is colour that makes our lives so very interesting. This is the reason why ignoring it and trying to focus instead on the shape is so challenging and works so well as a technique to improve concentration. If it helps, you can start by closing your eyes and picturing only the shape and its outline instead of the colours.

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## **Handling Distractions**

The most common difficulty in concentrating things is distractions. It goes without saying that you need to shut out distractions if you are to concentrate on your work properly. Train your brain to remember to deal with any distractions before you start your tasks. For example, you could shut down your email system and divert your phone, or tell colleagues that you need some quiet and not to disturb you for at least an hour.

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## Take a look on your Finger

Focus needs attention and this exercise fitted well. This is one of the simplest exercises you can practice to keep your attention on one thing for a long time. First, seat yourself on a chair and put your chin out. Pull your shoulders back and raise your right arm until it is level with your shoulder. Point your right hand to your right side, keeping your index finger outstretched. Now hold your position still for a full thirty seconds, during which time you look only at the tip of your index finger. Take note of all the detail you see on it – the size, the shape, the pattern of your fingerprints, etc. do not move your gaze from it.

Now slowly move your hand and your arm to come to rest in front of you. Move your gaze along with your fingertip as it moves – do not get distracted and take your eyes off it. When it comes to a stop in front of you, keep it there for another thirty seconds and once again, take in the detail. Then, move it once more, this time to your left side – follow the tip again without taking your eyes off it. Hold for another thirty seconds, and take in the detail before bringing it back to the center and then again to the right to end where you started.

Repeat this process with your left hand and arm outstretched, beginning with your left side this time. Practice this daily to improve concentration, and try to increase the time from thirty seconds to a minute. It will take time, but the longer you can keep at it, the stronger your focus becomes.

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## One Tasks at Time

Doing different tasks at a time is indeed troublesome. If you have a long list of chores to get done, you may find your brain working on over-drive. It can then be tempting to start doing several things at the same time, without really concentrating on any of them. Train your brain to deal with tasks one at a time.

This can be quite an art if you have always congratulated yourself on being able to multi-task – but it really is much better to focus on just one thing. Ultimately, you will get a lot more done that way. If you can't concentrate properly, you won't be able to do anything to the best of your ability. However, by training your brain to look at things in a different way, you should soon be able to get a lot more done – and you'll find that it is of a much higher quality too.

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## Take your Time

Time aid everything especially when your focusing on something. This trick will definitely teach you the value of focus on your time. Sit on a chair in front of a table. Place an analog clock on it right in front of your eyes. Now, look at it closely – follow the movement of the second hand alone, as it goes around the clock. You may count the seconds to begin with. Keep it up for at least three minutes.

The trick here is to try not to think of anything when you are following the movement of the second hand. Push every other thought to the back of your mind – do not let anything distract you from the tick-tock of the clock. This can be quite difficult initially, especially since there is nothing actually interesting about the second hand of the clock. But the longer you keep at it, the more you will find your concentration improving. Also make sure you do not move around much during this exercise. Keeping yourself still and moving only your eyes also involves an extraordinary amount of focus. Keep increasing the number of minutes you follow the hand – try to hit ten minutes without thinking of anything but the movement of the clock, and soon, you will find that your mind has gone blank and quiet.

# Chapter 7: Improve your Memory

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## Making Your Life Stress Free

Stress is the common cause of mind fatigue. It does not only affects physical aspect but also your state of mind as well. Stress is a normal physical reaction when one can sense an event as a threat which causes or upsets the balance of one's mind and body. It is somewhat like an automatic "push button" as a defense when our body senses danger, whether it is perceived as real or imagined.

To be able to fully understand why stress can wreak havoc on the brain, it is first necessary to understand what the body's response to stress is. When your body receives a threat stimulus, the nervous system and the endocrine system participate in an intricate process of neural inputs and release of hormones. The region of the brain known as the hypothalamus receives the sensory input of the stressor and will then release hormones to activate another area of the brain called the pituitary gland. While this hormone response is taking place, the hypothalamus is also sending a series of nerve signals to the adrenal gland. These nerve impulses trigger the production of epinephrine, or what is commonly referred to as adrenaline. Meanwhile, the activated pituitary gland releases a cell signaller known as ACTH, which travels through the bloodstream to the adrenal glands. At the site of the adrenal cortex, ACTH will bind to receptors and activate the adrenal glands to produce cortisol. Cortisol and epinephrine each have specific effects on the body.

When epinephrine levels increase, energy levels temporarily get a boost. This happens because epinephrine in the liver triggers the breakdown of sugars into glucose. Epinephrine also has a role in the lungs by binding to smooth muscle bronchioles. This causes the muscles to relax and dilates the bronchioles, increasing oxygen in the bloodstream. Epinephrine also binds to pacemaker cells in the heart, causing the body's heart rate to increase. The increased heart rate allows for larger amounts of oxygen to circulate, resulting in increased muscle energy.

Cortisol also works in a similar fashion. Higher levels of cortisol lead to an increase in gluconeogenesis, which increases blood sugar in the body. It also increases the breakdown and use of proteins, fats, and carbohydrates while suppressing the immune system. These processes allow the body to either fight or flee a stressful or dangerous situation by diverting body resources to energy production and muscle use. This is perfect in the short term to allow the body to rid itself of its stressor. However, long-term stress and long-term activation of these biological pathways may actually be very harmful to your brain. Long-term stress has been the focus of recent scientific research to study and clarify the risks of long-term stress on the body and find out what causes these negative effects.

Gray matter is the brain structure responsible for storing and processing information, while white matter is made of axons and is responsible for connecting areas of the brain through a network of fibres. White matter gets its name from the white colour of myelin. The researchers have thus proposed a mechanism for how this can cause mental disorders such as PTSD and anxiety. If, for example, the connectivity between the hippocampus and the amygdala of the brain are strengthened, this can alter how a brain functions. The hippocampus of the brain is responsible for regulating and managing memories and emotions, while parts of the amygdala are responsible for sensing a fight or flight situation. At the same time, the connection between the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex may be disrupted. The prefrontal cortex is responsible for moderating and inhibiting our emotional responses. In this situation, a person may become exposed to a stressor with its ability to inhibit the stress response diminished, and the amygdala's ability to elicit a response increased, causing a person to potentially overreact to a stressor or feel prolonged levels of stress, resulting in the effects of PTSD or anxiety.

## **Dealing with Stress**

Dealing with stress is important as dealing with your overall welfare. If you are experiencing a lot of stress in your life you are in very good company. In fact, studies show that as many as 117 million adults in the U.S. have reported high levels of anxiety and it is estimated that as much as 70% of the visits to doctors' offices are because of stress related problems. In an effort to feel less stressed several billion dollars were spent by Americans on

prescription tranquilizers and antidepressants last year. These enormous expenditures don't include over the counter remedies or other attempts to self-medicate with the use of alcohol or recreational drugs. The good news is that there is a lot you can do about stress and start feeling good again, but before we discuss that, it is helpful to understand how you experience stress and where your stress may be coming from.

## **Symptoms of Stress**

Recognizing the symptoms of stress is very important in making your memory improved and sharp as it can be. Most of us are familiar with common symptoms of stress and have experienced them at one time or another: tight shoulders, tight neck, tight back, headache, stomach problems, irritability, anxiousness, lack of energy, inability to focus or concentrate, and a general lack of satisfaction with life. When stress is chronic (ongoing) it can result in insomnia, high blood pressure, gastrointestinal problems including stomach ulcers and irritable bowel syndrome, weight gain or weight loss, heart disease, stroke, anxiety disorders, depression, burn-out, adrenal exhaustion, sexual dysfunction, inability to get pregnant, decreased ability of the immune system to fight off infections, increased sensitivity to pain, and skin problems.

Chronic stress can also have an effect on autoimmune diseases such as Lupus or rheumatoid arthritis – increasing the likelihood of flare-ups and symptoms. As indicated early in this chapter stress actually accelerates the aging process.



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## **Health is Wealth**

Maintaining good health increase the chance to have a sharpen memory and improved cognitive process. Your memory is bound to be poor if your health is poor. If you don't feel well, you will be concentrating on your body rather than anything going on elsewhere. Make sure you get plenty of sleep, eat well and keep your alcohol levels down.

You probably won't be able to do this if you are stressed, which is why it is important to deal with any sources of stress first. Exercise can also help, particularly if you are stressed. Find something that suits your particular level of fitness.

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## **Exercise your Memory**

Using Your Memory skills as often as it could be helps you to improve your retention abilities and cognitive process. There are many exercises you can do enhance your memory skills. Some are listed here for you to try.

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## Active Imagination

Active Imagination also known as visualization is one of the exercises you should try in order to enhance your memorization abilities of your brain. Visualization is a great memory exercise. You may have used it at birthday parties as a child when asked to memorize several objects before they are hidden. You would then be asked to repeat the names of the objects for a prize.

You can do this while going about your everyday life. While standing in the supermarket queue, visualize what is in your shopping basket without looking at it. Alternatively, focus on your bedroom at home and force yourself to remember all the things that are in it. In time, you will hopefully become more observant and, as a result, will be less likely to forget things.

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## **Reiteration**

Reiteration or repeating words all over again at a time is also another memory exercise for yourself. So, on your way to work, repeat the list of things that you need to do. Then when you get into work, deal with each issue before you forget. The same trick can be used when going shopping. Repeat the list of things you need to purchase and you'll find it easier to remember when you get there. In time, you'll get better at remembering.

You may also find that you are more likely to remember appointments if you repeat things back to the person arranging them;

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## **Games Improved Your Memory**

Did you know that gaming has also a greater benefits in improving your memory skills other than enjoyment and leisure? New computer-based memory games are constantly coming out, but you don't need to spend a fortune – you will even be able to find plenty of games online that are free. If you do decide that you want to invest in a good memory game, you could try the Posit Science Brain Fitness Program, which will provide you with listening exercises that become increasingly harder.

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## Language Improvement

Learning new language improved the connections of neurons in your brains which sharpen your memory. It may seem like a tall order to learn a language just to improve your memory; after all, learning a language is time-consuming if you are to learn it well. However, you don't need to commit a lot of time and resources to learn the basics of a language.

You may even decide to learn just a few words in a number of languages. Doing this with children is a great way to turn language learning into a game and you can even test each other on how much you can remember. If you have a poor memory, the easiest way to improve it is to deal with any mental and physical health issues first. However, simple exercises to help you remember things can also be of great help, provided that you remember to do them on a daily basis. If you train your brain to do them without thinking too hard about it, you should soon see the benefits.

### First thing First

The first thing you need to understand is why you need to understand language. This may seem like a rather useless thing to worry about, but believe me, it makes a huge difference! Unless you know why you are learning the language, you cannot focus on the process of learning itself. Is it for a professional cause? Is it because you are moving to a new country and want to prepare yourself? Or is it simply because you enjoy learning new languages and want to try something new?

The problem with many people is that they simply jump into learning a new language without realizing how hard it can be. If you are not passionate about it, or if do not have an urgent need to do so, then you will find yourself giving up halfway simply because of how taxing it can be. It requires using both rote memory as well as application skills and it takes time and patience – two qualities that are not easy to come by. Added to that is the fact that a number of people sign up for language classes based on a passing interest or the fact that the language itself boosts their social status. Superficial reasons like these will only mean that you are really not into it and will quite at the first

opportunity.

So before you begin learning a new language, make sure you know why you are doing so. If you are determined to stick with it and work it out, then well for you! Otherwise, you do not want to waste time and effort – even money – on an endeavour that is doomed to fail.

### Know your style

It is highly imperative that you should have a clear understanding of what kind of learning suits you the best. For instance some people can learn more efficiently from reading and re-reading the same part again and again, while some others respond better to audio inputs. For such people, using recorded conversations and lessons are the best way of learning. Yet there are some others who can pick up any concept of language if they are given a visual demonstration. Hence, analyse and figure out what works best for you and proceed based on that.

Learning is a highly individualistic process. Remember, you are not sitting in a formal classroom with fellow students to slave over the verbs and nouns and pronouns and the like. Keep things simple – figure out what works for you and then go from there. If you feel that signing up for a formal class will help, then go for it. On the other hand, if you would prefer to work by yourself and on your own time, that is okay too!

According to experts, there are three broad methods by which a person learns something new. There is the audio style – as discussed earlier, these are the people who can learn by listening to something repeatedly. They respond well to auditory inputs. So if you fall into this category, then work within its framework! For instance, you could get a friend to read out meanings of new words to you and repeat after them as they pronounce it for you. Or you could listen to people speaking online in the language you are trying to learn and try to repeat it by yourself.

The second type is the visual type of learning. As the name suggests, these people learn best when they see something. Visual stimuli do far more for them than any other type. So, using colourful charts and word diagrams will go a long way in learning the language. For instance, when you are trying to learn the letters, try painting them out in bright colours. It will help you remember them better!

The third method is the kinaesthetic method, which, as is obvious, is a combination of all types of learning, including audio, video, repetition, etc. this works best for most people. Remember, like focus these techniques are also a continuum – nobody is perfectly an auditory or visually stimulated person. It works better for some since they are naturally more attuned to such stimuli, but it can work for anyone really.

To figure out what works best for you, try this simple test. Pick up the book you want to use as your guideline for learning the language. Choose some difficult words and try to learn them quickly by them again and repeating again – look at the words as you do so. Now put the book down and stop learning for the day. When you return the next day, test yourself to see if you remember all those words and the right pronunciation and meaning. If you do remember – and you find that you visualize the words as you try to remember them – you fall more into the visual learners category than you do the auditory learners.

If that does not work for you, pick another set of words. This time, use auditory aids. Record yourself or someone else saying the words correctly and listen to the recording repeatedly for a while. Close it and then return to the next day – once again, try to remember them. If you can, then you are more inclined towards auditory learning than anything else.

The third category is the easiest to work for. Choose a new set of words and try to learn them however you want – use repetition techniques, association techniques, rote memory techniques and the like. If you can remember them next day regardless of how you do it, then you are a kinaesthetic learner.

The reason you want to identify the type of learning that works best for you is so that you can structure your learning program in a way that augments your learning ability. Just like we improved your focus by practicing certain techniques, this time too we want to equip you to the best of your ability! When you have a program that is structured and well-designed particularly for you alone so that it compliments your strengths, it makes language learning easier and faster.

## **Appropriate Words Selection**

Know how to pronounce properly. Always make it a point to learn the



pronunciation of a word correctly when you learn that word. This is an area where people commonly make mistakes when picking up a new language. When you are a beginner, the urge to learn as many new words a day as possible will be the prime objective and in course of this, the importance of the correct pronunciation is sometimes overlooked. This can be easily avoided by exercising a bit of diligence in this aspect right from the beginning.

Another thing to remember is that you cannot learn all the words in a language. This is an insane and an impossible task. What you will need to do is to pick the right words to learn. This is why knowing why you are learning the language becomes important; apart from making you passionate about it, it allows you structure your learning program according to your particular needs. If, for instance, your objective is simply being able to communicate in a given language about your daily routines, then your vocabulary list must include the daily small talk words like names, good mornings and good evenings. Of course, it does not have to be so very specific, but having a general idea of what you want to learn makes it easier to decide how to learn it.

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## Check Your Grammar

It is the most vital in every language, grammar or spelling. Grammar is any language is an aspect as important as the pronunciation. And as is the case with pronunciation, this is an area that is overlooked by beginners. In some languages, such as German, the right grammar can make a whale of a difference to the idea being conveyed. When you learn a sentence or a string of phrases, make sure that you get the structure and formation right in accordance with the principles of grammar.

On the other hand, do not get too carried away with grammar alone. Remember, the point of learning a new language is to be able to communicate in it! So as a beginner, allow yourself to make mistakes with grammar and new words. As long as you are able to get your message across, you are doing fine. As time passes and you keep improving, you can work on perfecting your grammar and speaking in proper sentences.

The best way to improve your grammar is to practice speaking daily. Here is a quick tip you can try out – pick any 20 most regularly used verbs in the language. Pick another 20 uncommonly used verbs too. Now use them contextually to form a conversation – include questions, answers, affirmative and negative sentences. Also use them in different tense forms – past, present and future. The best part about this is that it can be a lot of fun! You can come up with the silliest of conversations between subjects A and B – just try to keep the sentences grammatically correct.

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## **Aim for the Goal**

The main reason for this endeavour is to sharpen your memory and concentration. By setting targets for yourself in terms of the number of new words to be learnt every day. For example, fix a target of 30 a day and make sure that you pick up at least 30 new words from the language. And the job does not end there, you will have to sit and memorize the words in the manner that works for you the best. For example, by writing down a few times, saying it aloud in front of the mirror, or making short sentences employing the new words.

Here are some quick ways to learn new words – make it fun! For instance, if you are learning names of things, try using sticky notes to label things around the house. Put up these sticky notes on the thing you are trying to name. Once you have learnt it, get a friend to randomly point out the thing and have a rapid fire round, where you cannot think about it, but simply rattle off the name of the thing being pointed at.

Now remember, the idea is not just to learn it, but to retain it too. Often, you will find that you remember the 30 words you learnt today, but tomorrow, when you try to remember them, you will find it difficult. To avoid that difficulty, spend some time on revision. Take 20 minutes before you begin each day to skim through what you learnt the previous day and revise it. This applies not only to learning new words, but any other concept too. It helps improve your retention span and gets you warmed up to face the new challenge for the new day!

## **Practice the Basic**

This is the basic exercises you need to learn in every language learning. Practicing alphabet in new languages that do not employ the Roman script, such as Chinese or Thai, is an extremely important and integral part of the learning process. You will have to be continually practicing the alphabets in order to get the hang of them. Many techniques can be employed here such as using audio and visual means, learning by relating the alphabets to concepts to retain them in your mind, animations etc. If a particular area is exceedingly

difficult, you could even employ the method of association.

## **Practice makes perfect**

As the saying goes practice makes perfect so once you have learned the basics, the next step is to practice the language on a daily basis. The importance of regular practice can be underlined by the fact that it is infinitely easier to unlearn and forget a language in the absence of practice. Often, people complain that they slave away at a language for years together without ever being able to master it. The problem is that they are not diligent in their practice of the language – even half an hour a day would be more than enough if you work regularly and in a focused manner. Try not to skip and stick to a regular pattern so that learning becomes easier for you.

Here are some of those very important things you should do while practicing the language – if you do not practice, you will never master it!

## **Learn to Listen**

If you want to learn fast then learn the language of listening. Listening to the language is the best way of retaining and practicing it. This is especially useful for those people who respond well to auditory stimuli. There are many ways by which you can do this. You can listen to recordings of conversations in the language or make use of audio books. In fact, go ahead and make it fun for yourself! As I said before, language is as much about culture as it is communication, so take the time to watch television programs and movies in the language. This way, you will learn the language as well as information about the people who speak it! Each time, pay careful attention to the way the words are pronounced, the way they are used in context and try to understand the meaning of them. The more you listen, the more you understand and grasp it.

Have listening tests for yourself. Record a conversation in the language – you could even take it out of your favourite TV program! Get someone else who speaks the language to write out a simple quiz for you and then attempt it to see how well you understand the native speakers. This way, you can see how much you have learnt.

But it has to be kept in mind that mere listening will not do; you have to speak along with what you are hearing and repeat it. Pronunciation is going to depend on how much you practice. As you watch something, repeat it along with the native speaker onscreen to improve your own ability in the language.

## **Read and Write**

Many experts believe that a person's brain develop faster when they are learning new things. Language is quite challenging especially when it is your first to encounter unfamiliar words and the key to a successful language learning is to know it deeply by reading and try to write it. Reading books in the language that appeal to you is another excellent method of improving your grasp over the language. For instance, if you prefer fiction, you could start with simple books that have been written in that genre. The advantage is that, you grasp the language better when the subject matter is interesting rather than boring textbook material. You could expand your collection gradually to newspapers, magazines etc.

Once you start reading, the next step is to write in it. Begin with copying a few sentences from books in the language. Gradually push yourself to form proper sentences by yourself, instead of simply writing out from a given source. If you want, you could even maintain a dairy of your thoughts in the new language – make sure to write in proper, full sentences with right grammar! And doesn't that sound rather fun? Writing a diary in a language only for you – it will take you back to your high school days!

## **Dictionary**

Dictionary is a prerequisite in learning new language. As you begin to read and write, it is obviously a very good idea to keep a dictionary on you. You will not lose momentum as you are reading – quickly look up the word and learn its meaning so that you can use it contextually. Another good way to remember it would be to use sticky notes as you read. When you come across a new word you do not understand, use your dictionary and look up its meaning – but don't leave it there! Pull out a sticky note and jot down the meaning and stick it into your diary. On the same page, try making a new

sentence with it and then write it down. If you are so inclined, you could even make a full paragraph or even a short story with it so that you will not forget it! And writing such a long piece would entail that you learn more new words – so put that dictionary to good use!

## **Talk like an Expert**

Learning language is completely useless if you cannot speak about it. Do not be afraid of making mistakes; it is a part of the learning process and is to be expected. You cannot be perfect, after all.

The more you speak the language, the better you get at it. Try talking to yourself in the language; all the writing and formulating sentences you did with your diary will definitely come in handy here. If you do not even try to speak, all that you have learned so far will simply stagnate and then you will forget altogether.

Be one with them

Speaking with natives makes you accustom to the right way how they speak the language. Experts maintain that, in spite of all the advancements in learning techniques, the best method of gaining command over a language is to converse with the native speakers. This way you get a firsthand perspective of how that language is actually spoken in real world situations, rather than concocted conversations in textbooks. You can also pick up proverbs and expressions when you converse with natives.

Look around in your locality to see if there is anybody who is a native speaker. If you can find someone like that, take the time to go see them and make friends with them. Hold regular conversations with them and try to pick up the way they speak – from the way they pronounce their words to the idioms and the phrases they use.

If you don't have anybody in your area that is a native speaker, enlist a friend who is also learning the language to help! Converse regularly with them. And this is where television and films come into play. The actors are, more often than not, native speakers of the language. Follow the way they speak and try to emulate their style. Watch these shows with your friend and then hold discussions about that particular episode in the foreign language itself. That way, it becomes a fun thing to do, while you still work at improving your

language!

Another important aspect of listening and speaking to a native speaker is the exposure you receive to the various dialects of the language. Take English, for instance. There are so many types of English dialects in the world; it is hard to keep track of them all! American English uses words differently, as does British English. When you speak to natives or watch shows and films by natives, you get to see the different ways in which language can be used. Of course, you would follow a single set standard – British English, when taught, for example, is set to be the Received Pronunciation or the RP, as it is called. But when you know and understand the many dialects that exist, it helps you grasp the language better and communicate well too!

## **Know the Language by Heart**

Learning does not occur only to the brain but most importantly by heart. Make it a point to interact in the language every day. For this you have many options. You could hold conversations with native speakers of the language, as mentioned in the earlier part, or even do silly stuff such as speaking back to the television. Lose your inhibitions in practicing the language, because you have to realize the simple fact that mistakes are inevitable and cannot be completely avoided. If you have a friend coming with you to the classes, resolve to converse with him only in the foreign language.

## **Try it in Public Speaking**

Learning a particular language can be only proven once you try it in public speaking. Practice public speaking in the foreign language. If you go for formal classes, you will have umpteen opportunities to do so in the form of impromptu debates and speeches. This is important due to the fact that public speaking brings out the best and worst in you in terms of the language.

## **Take a Visit**

There is no doubt the best way to learn any language is immerse yourself to that particular country. If you can do so, please go ahead and make the trip. Some people argue that this is unnecessary – with technology, you can get

access to native speakers on television and the internet itself. While this is true, these things are also impersonal. What you need is real human contact; as I have said repeatedly, language does not come in isolation. With it comes culture and its people and by interacting with them personally, you will get a new appreciation for it.

Talking to the locals will help you speak the language better and understand the common phrases and idioms that sometimes are ignored in the formal speech of television and media. Do not shy away from speaking; the natives will appreciate your efforts and will definitely help!

Mistakes are the First step in Learning.

Don't be afraid to commit mistakes because even natives do not speak perfectly on their mother tongue. It is a strange thought, isn't it, that even a native speaker cannot be perfect in his tongue? Translate that to your own experience – would you blame yourself if you made a mistake in speaking in your own mother tongue? Obviously, you would not.

Language, as an entity, is absolutely vast and huge. Nobody can know every word or every grammar rule or every sentence. It evolves as the people speaking it evolve – it can never be stagnant. Much like modern trends, phrases come and phrases go and we must learn to adapt. That automatically means making mistakes.

A lot of people do not speak in the new language since they are so very afraid of making mistakes. Don't be! The whole point of language itself is to be able to communicate, not write prose and poetry. Of course, if that is your intention, then you should try that too, but when you are a beginner, do not be afraid of making errors.

Shed your inhibitions and start speaking. If you are so afraid of making mistakes, start by speaking to yourself or to your friends, or even talking back to the television. Before long, you will find that you yourself want to converse with a native speaker. If you make a mistake, do not get embarrassed and then clam up – simply apologize and then continue to speak, the way you would if you bungled up a word in your own mother tongue. It is normal, even expected and nothing to be ashamed of!



# Chapter 8: Improving your Logic

One of the most important areas in your mind that is so necessary in your daily life is decision making thus improving your reasoning or logic is a must. If you've ever had to do a range of psychometric tests as part of a job application process, you will know how hard they can be. But companies choose to use psychometric tests to measure your behavioral style and mental capabilities. Although many people believe they do not accurately measure their personality and ability to do a job, such tests have proved to be very reliable. As part of the testing process, you will probably have to do answer questions that test your critical thinking and reasoning skills.

Like it or not, you need good critical thinking and reasoning skills in just about everything you do, whether it is part of your job, or your everyday life.

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## Use your Time Wisely

Spending your time wisely is one of the best strategy to improve your reasoning skills. All of use waste some time. WE all fail to use our time pleasurably or productively at some point in our lives. Sometimes we'll jump from one diversion to the next, without enjoying any of those diversions. Sometimes we'll become irritated about something that's not in our control. Sometimes we'll fail to plan well which causes us negative consequences we might easily have avoided. For example, we might spend an unnecessary amount of time in traffic, though we could have left fifteen minutes earlier and avoided that rush. Sometimes we'll worry unproductively, or sometimes we'll spend time regretting the past. Sometimes we'll just stare blankly off into space.

The key element is that time has gone past even though if we had thought enough about it and considered the options we had, we would never have deliberately spent our time the way we did. So why not take advantage of the time you normally waste through practicing your critical thinking during those otherwise wasted moments? For example, rather than sitting in front of the television at the end of the day as you flick from channel to channel in a vain search for a show that's worth watching, spend that time or at least some of it thinking back over your day and evaluating your weaknesses and strengths.

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## Curiosity

Curiosity gives you the power to know more and to gain more insight which eventually helps you to improve your reasoning skills. All of use waste some time. WE all fail to use our time pleaurably or productively at some point in our lives. Sometimes we'll jump from one diversion to Sometimes we'll become irritated about something that's not in our control. Sometimes we'll fail to plan well which causes us negative consequences we might easily have avoided. For example, we might spend an unnecessary amount of time in traffic, though we could have left fifteen minutes earlier and avoided that rush. Sometimes we'll worry unproductively, or sometimes we'll spend time regretting the past. Sometimes we'll just stare blankly off into space.

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## Be Up to Date

Being up to date to latest information and useful resources keep you on the track. Every week, create a heightened awareness of one of the universal intellectual standards, which are accuracy, clarity, precision, depth, relevance, significant, and logicalness. Focus a week on clarity and the following on relevance. For example, if you're focusing on clarity for that week, try to take notice of when you are unclear when you communicate with someone else. Notice when they are unclear in what they're saying to you.

When you're reading something, notice whether you're clear about what you're reading. When you write out or orally express your views, ask yourself whether you're being clear about what you're trying to say. When you do this, focus on the four techniques of clarification. These are stating what you're saying in a clear and concise manner, elaborating on your meaning using other words, giving examples of what you're talking about from experiences you've had, and using analogies, pictures, metaphors, and diagrams to illustrate what you mean. In other words, you'll frequently make a statement, elaborate on that statement, illustrate that statement, and exemplify that statement. You'll regularly ask others to follow suit.

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## **Knowing what other's Think**

Knowing what other's think give you a wonderful insight in assessing your self's decision making ability and reasoning skills. Again, you may have got used to your own views and be unprepared to listen to anyone else's. However, the chances are that other people's views are just as valid as your own, provided that you give them the chance to air their views. One of the reasons for this is that you can get very emotive when you feel strongly about something.

You need to train your brain to get rid of the emotion you feel about certain subjects. Once you take emotion out of the equation, you may well find that you see things in a different way and, as a result, are able to make far more solid decisions.

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## Learn New Things

Learning new things is fun and fruitful. You can learn new characteristics which you can adapt to improve your learning and reasoning abilities. Choose one intellectual trait, such as empathy, autonomy, perseverance, humility, or courage, to strive for every month, focusing on how you're able to develop that trait in yourself. As an example, concrete on intellectual humility through noticing when you admit you're wrong. Notice when you refuse an admission of wrong-doing, even in the face of glaring evidence that you're actually wrong. Notice when you're defensive when another person attempts to point out a deficiency in your work or your thought process. Notice when your intellectual arrogance stops you from learning, for example, when you state that you already know everything you can about this subject. By owning your intellectual ignorance, you can begin to finally deal with it.

Everyone makes mistakes. You will make plenty of them along the way just like everyone else. However, instead of trying to hide your mistakes and forget about them, you should train yourself to analyse where you went wrong. This can be a very painful process, because no one likes to admit that they were wrong, but by doing so, you can use your critical thinking and reasoning skills to decide where you went wrong.

It may well have been because of emotion, which is a good lesson to learn – then you know that the next time you make an important decision, you will need to find strategies to avoid that emotion. Make a note of all your mistakes in a diary and what you could have done to make a better decision. You will then have written detail of your thoughts to refer back to as necessary.

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## **Decide for Yourself**

Learning to decide for yourself is essential in daily living. You make decisions on a daily basis, from deciding what to wear in the morning to deciding what time you want to go to bed. However, you can practice the strategies above by taking one relatively minor problem you have every day and deciding what you can do about it. For the sake of providing an example, say that you need to decide

There is no right or wrong answer to making decisions like these; the key thing is that you are using your critical thinking and reasoning skills to come up with an answer that is based on the facts that you know and not your emotions.

# Chapter 9: Improving Your Thinking Speed

Nowadays where people tend to get everything done as fast as it could be, your brain needs to be at pace in speed and acuity. This needs to be done by improving your brain performance to make it to the fast pace of modern lifestyle.

Improving your memory, concentration and critical thinking and reasoning skills should all help you to increase the speed at which your brain works. However, there are yet more strategies by which you can improve your mental capacity and therefore get things done more quickly and efficiently.



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## Reading

Reading is an essential brain exercises and also favourite past time for others. Then, when they do read, they are forced to read every word slowly in order to let the information sink in.

In actual fact, you don't need to read every single word in order to understand the meaning of what you are reading; just knowing what the key words are will allow you to know what is going on.

In order to speed read, you need to set aside a certain amount of time every day to read – usually first thing in the morning before you become tired is best. Choose whatever you feel most comfortable with; if you don't like fiction, or long-winded text books, choose something like a newspaper, or a magazine article.

Don't read the words out loud in your head as you are reading; you will be forced to read every single word if you do. You will find speed reading becomes easier as you practice; you just need to train your brain to do so.

Speed reading can be particularly useful if you have to read lots of text at work or for your studies. It will enable you to skim books and articles until you find the information that you want. You can then take your time to read only what is relevant.

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## Repeating

Practice makes perfect and repeating it often makes it excellent. If you want to get faster at what you do, the best way is to repeat tasks until you find ways of doing things most efficiently. Once you have done this, remember the most efficient methods you have discovered and make sure that these are the methods you use from now on.

You may need to keep repeating the methods so that your brain gets used to how you want to do things. In so doing, the brain creates connections that it will remember when repeating the same tasks.

To make more sense of this, think back to when you were a child and were learning new vocabulary. You would ask your parents to read the same story to you over and over again. In so doing, you would learn from the experience. But if you didn't keep hearing the story, you would have forgotten the new vocabulary because your brain had forgotten the connections it had made.

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## Logic

People who tend to think slowly are often troublesome and most of the time cannot go through needed tasks to be done. Speed thinking is a concept created by Dr. Ken Hudson, although other experts have spoken and written about similar ideas in the past. The aim is that you only have a certain amount of time in which to make a decision and, as a result, you have to strip out all of your egotistical thoughts and only have time to make a decision based on the information that you have. The idea is that it complements, rather than replaces traditional thinking.

Dr. Hudson's speed thinking system is based on a four-step process, which asks the thinker to start, evaluate, build and act. He has written books on speed thinking, such as "How to thrive in a time-poor world," and has a website which presents many of his ideas.

You can, however, train yourself to speed think without the aid of expensive books. You just need to train yourself to make decisions quickly by not giving yourself enough time to analyse issues in too much depth. For example, if you need to eat, don't sit and think about what you would like to eat; just go to the kitchen, open the fridge and eat whatever is most convenient.

There are times when speed thinking is not appropriate. If you are doing something that could involve danger, for example, you really need to think through your options before making the one that is safest. However, for some things, such as deciding what you are going to do next, speed thinking can be a useful concept and can help you to avoid procrastination.

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## **Invention**

Reinventing your self is a powerful tool you need to embrace for better improvement of your life. But some people tend to be complacent and didn't want to do anything new however, if you want to continue to challenge your brain and keep it active, thereby enabling it to react quickly, you really need to try new things on a regular basis. Challenge yourself by doing something that you wouldn't usually do. It will force you to think in different ways and could just change your life.

# Chapter 10: Creating Lasting Memories

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## Write a Journal

They said that the best way to remember things is to write about it. Some of the famous people in the world are known thru their memoir or written memories which reminds them how they live their life to the fullest. Every week, write out a certain number of journal entries. You should use the following format and keep each numbered stage separate.

1. **Situation.** Describe the situation that was or is emotionally significant for you. It must be something that you deeply care about. And focus on only one situation at a time.
2. **You're Response.** Describe what you did in response to the situation. Be exact and specific about every action taken.
3. **Analysis.** You should then analyze using what you've written what exactly was going on in the situation. Dig underneath the surface.
4. **Assessment.** Assess the consequences of your analysis. What did you learn about yourself or someone else? What would you do differently if you were able to relive that situation?

Ideas will keep popping into your head. To maintain mental organization and prevent your mind from being clouded with your overwhelming thoughts, always have a method of data recording with you. Nothing beats pen and paper, of course, but in this new age world, smart phones are the preferred choice of today's urban folks.

It doesn't matter how big or small your ideas are; just take note of them. Note taking is not limited to ideas; whether it is in a meeting or a class, it is pertinent to jot everything down. This system allows you to review your

thoughts and recordings in a more convenient time and allow you to perceive them one at a time so as to prevent an overflow and loss of focus.

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## Create an Organizer

Nowadays people tend to rely on their gadgets to remind them on their schedules. This helpful indeed when you are a busy person. Creating an organizer will help you to be coordinated in your time thus limiting cluttered time or wasted time.

In keeping with the spirit of organization, it is important that you have everything that you need for different occasions in a place of its own. It cannot be stressed enough that having a pleasant, pristine environment makes for a tranquil mind and a more productive lifestyle.

Everything should also be put back in its place. Organization is one thing; maintenance is another.

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## **Remind Yourself Always**

This indeed very basic but this is the most important aspect you need to do for yourself. Some people are often forgetful in many things which often troublesome but keeping yourself reminded by all means on the things what to do is very important.



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## Discipline

Creating memories needs discipline. There has never-ever been an undisciplined world champion. Our rewards are always directly proportional to our efforts. It sometimes takes years of training to develop abilities in the area in which we would like to achieve success. People say, “That person has such a talent,” but they never look down the road to see how many hours have been spent training. If you want to master the skills that you have learned in this book, or if you want to master anything, you need self-discipline. Self-discipline is not self-deprivation. It is about raising your standards and going for and being more.

Many people think that things are going to magically appear in their lives. Think about it... people want beautiful healthy teeth, but they don't have the self-discipline to floss them. Is it expensive? Does it take a lot of time? Is it difficult to do? It is none of these. How can they expect to change any area of their lives if they can't even bring themselves to do that? So why don't people floss?

People simply don't do it because they think that the future will be a better place than today, without doing anything to make it better.

What do you want? What are you doing daily? If your daily actions are not moving you in the direction of what you want, then you will never get what you want. Common sense, isn't it?

It is not that your goals are physically impossible; it is more that you lack the self-discipline to stick to them. There are four keys to creating more self-discipline in your life and the first one is:

# Chapter 11: Creativity

Creativity enhance memory improvement and brain skills. Creativity is not something that you were born with, it is certainly a skill that you can acquire irrespective of your age or profession or vocation. Believe me you can do it because you have the same base material in your brains, the same ability to form more and more interconnections in your brain once you commit to developing your creativity. It all has to start with a belief that you are already creative. In fact we are already creative since birth. Our only task is to uncover and unblock this creativity and give it vent to exhibit itself.

Before you can begin to enhance your creative sprint muscles you need to believe that you have the capacity and capability to do it. Remember that the base physical structure of your brain and that of a renowned creative genius is the same. It is only that by virtue of using it again and again he has been able to make more interconnections inside his brain and develop more neural pathways for information and ideas to be flow freely. But what is the single most important quality that sets these creative geniuses apart?

It is their unflinching faith in themselves and their creative abilities. They hardly pay any heed to what the world has to say about them. They are self-confident and believe in their power to generate more and more creative ideas. They believe that they can do it easily and therefore never hesitate in trying to do it. In fact they are confident that they can successfully generate creative ways and ideas to deal with any problem.

On the contrary if you think that you are dull, if you do not back your unlimited potential for creative thinking and creative production, you stand no chance of coming out with any great idea or worthwhile creative work. You have dug your grave even before you took birth.

So it is always in your best interest to believe in your unlimited creative powers. Even if you doubt it, to give yourself a start, just pretend for some time that you are the most creative person that this world has seen. Just assume that you have it in you to churn out one creative idea after another and see how the magic works. It is, only by believing in our creative ability, that we give ourselves the opportunity and chance to be creative. So shut out

all input from external sources, ignore what anyone has to say about you and march boldly ahead with the faith, confidence and feeling that you are the most creative person that the world has ever seen.

# Chapter 11: Benefits of Creativity in Memory Improvement

Creativity breeds new ideas and information to the brain thus enhancing reasoning and retention skills. Creativity ensures that you are well noticed among a bunch of competitors. It puts that 'winner' tag on your head and you appear in a different light if your work has that elusive and uncommon touch of creativity. The hunt for creativity separates you from the crowd and lets the other parties know that they have got some tough competition. It filters out the best from the rest and leaves out the mundane and the dull.

It's not in everyone to be creative. Some have it attributed to them from their genes while some struggle for it their entire life, fumbling with methods to stand out among the lot. However, once you have achieved the desired level of creativity you can impress those who need to be impressed, and score home some really valuable runs.

Being creative is advantageous for you not only in your professional set ups but also in your personal lives. Girls dig guys who paint, write or sketch; basically those who create. You stand good chances of finding a suitable life partner if you display some exceptional creative skills. It can be considered as one of the qualities Darwin would have ascribed to the alpha male who seeks to win over his love.

Creativity is also about eliminating weak competition. It's not always that you can be the best in the race. At times, you have to run slow and make sure everyone else runs slower. Even if your result isn't the ideal one, add a pinch of creativity and voila! You have opened up an opportunity to impress those noticing and responsible for awarding you for your work.

The quality of creativity is as much about being persistent as it's about winning. You can be creative for a day or a month and the next person could be average for a year. Among the two of you, the other person might excel more than you. So creativity not only requires inducement but also needs to be stoked from time to time. What good a dragon be if it roared brilliantly and produced no fire in the battle? Creativity therefore, needs to maintain its

run well over consistently, over a period of an elongated time period.

A person is known by his work. Work, when propelled by creative powers are the best to survive and win applause not just from the society but also from your competitors. You stand to gain awards, be it economic or social. The light a creative person is seen in is different from the light a non-creative person is seen in. It's not always that one gets to see something brilliantly performed or done.

Works differentiate a man from others. By simply looking at a work you could say a lot about its owner or creator. A creative work gets more recognition than an ordinary one. This is where the difference between the mundane and the extraordinary creeps in.

Creativity elevates your personal skills to an unimaginable extent; so much so that it inculcates in you a habit of producing the best at any random point of time. It not only helps you reach momentary achievements but also prepares you for the prolonged survival that will keep you in the race. It rows the seed of excellence in your blood and prevents you from going for the second best.

The exception to this rule is that it's not necessary that best and the creative would be the same thing. Something that gets noticed may not be creative while a brilliantly creative piece may not get declared best. Such situations may not even crave for creativity; maybe all they are looking for is technical satisfaction and not a further view of the creative touch.

The benefits of creativity are various and wide ranging. They start with differentiation and end nowhere for creation has no boundaries. If you have got the creative zeal inside of you, you will, in time, excel in any field of life.

Imagine two architects being allotted the work of constructing the same building separately. Those who allotted the work would be more impressed by the architect who puts in his own creative inputs into the work and not the one who completed the building first.

Professional lives apart, there are other benefits of having a creative mind. You tend to see the whole world through an entirely different lens. If one was to peep into the mind of a creative person, he'd go insane for the very possibility that the images he'd find inside would deviate so much from the standard normalcy that it'd drive him crazy to even fathom the probability of such advancement's existence.

Creativity isn't all about being different. Anyone could be different if they chose to. You could fail epically and claim to be different. In order to be creative in the real sense of the word, you need to further prove that your creativity either produced some result or the lesser advantageous trait, made someone laugh their lungs out. It's often advisable to choose the former.

# Chapter 12: Memory Improvement for Students

In terms of memory improvement, students are the one who need it the most for they are the one who are often exposed to ideas and information that needs much of brain memorization skills. Your greatest challenge therefore is finding out who you are and what you are capable of. I would like to use the analogy of a rose. A rose starts as a rose bud, full of potential but not ready to show the world. The rose bud depicts a person who is scared and hiding from the world, someone with potential to be great as all people are but has not found their genius and accomplished very little. People in this state are unfulfilled and frustrated. They believe there is more to life, but may never find it. Now I'm not talking about introverts or extroverts, but people hiding their true colours from the world.

Being in this space, attracts nothing and no one. Bees are not attracted to a rose bud; people do not go around looking at rose buds and commenting how beautiful they are. Likewise, a person in this state of mind and posture does not attract success and cannot be truly successful. But if the rose bud is open and the rose blossom allowed bloom and blow in the breeze, it attracts the attention of everyone including insects and bees. The reason it does is because it is giving; yes it is giving off its scent and its colour and it is being what it was always intended to be, a beautiful rose flower. You need to open up just like the rose bud, risk being noticed, risk by giving of yourself to the world, serve and be served; it's the only way you will be fulfilled. Risk leads to success and success can be defined as the accomplishment of an aim or purpose.

It's the accomplishing, the doing, the completion of a purpose, goal or target or the desire or the want or the need. I am reminded of an old Africa tale; Behold the tortoise for it only progresses when it stick its neck out. So if success is what you are looking for, what are the steps and how can you get there? We'll all I know is that it's your decision and all decisions have consequences. Good decisions have good consequences and bad decisions have bad consequences. Know this, the choice will ultimately always be

yours.

We are the only species on earth that has to continually make decisions and act on them daily, just to survive and or flourish. Living as humans is a constant challenge where wants and needs are driven by advertising, cultures and society. What are really your wants and needs, or do external forces drive you? These wants and needs and the requirement to constantly make decisions can be a curse or a blessing. It's these challenges that have made us the "dominant" species with the imagination and the ability to invent and build things without restriction; if we can think it we can achieve it, just look around at what man has accomplished.

All I can do is share with you what I have found to be the secret to success. What I have found is that successful people do, what unsuccessful people don't do. I chose these words carefully, if we analyse what I'm saying; I didn't say successful people do what unsuccessful people cannot do. I said what unsuccessful people, don't do, they can and could have done it, and they just didn't. I found all successful people have the following attributes and live by or do these 10 steps throughout their lives. I call it my 10 baby steps to success and I hope you will use them to reach your goals and join the world's success stories.



# Chapter 14: Tips in Improving Memory for Students

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## **Aiming For Your Goal.**

You have to see, feel and experience the finished product the champion you have become. If college graduation is your goal, visualize the great hall with all the university staff in their academic dress sitting on the stage, the hall packed with parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters. See yourself walking on stage, smell the air, your smile broad with pride and your heart beating with anticipation. Experience the whole thing in your mind and feel great. Once you have experienced graduating you've locked it in to your DNA and it is good.

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## **Desire**

You have to have a desire for it and I mean a white-hot desire that triggers a passion and excitement for achievement and success. This is not an idea of success; it's a desire for success and there is a difference.

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## **Faith**

Here you have to believe you can be successful without having proof, you see you haven't done it yet. Here you need to have faith in yourself and the visualization of, and belief that you will succeed.

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## **Belief**

This is not I think I can or maybe I will one day, this is the 100% confidence in oneself and the support around you that whatever goal you set yourself you will achieve it. As discussed earlier, if you can think it, you can achieve it. However you still need more steps and there are no shortcuts.

The 5th Step is Specialized knowledge – this is a critical step in your journey to success and this can be attained formally through institutions or informally through self-help, but know this, you will need the academic knowledge and or the know how experience before you become successful. So you have all five previous attributes, stopping here, believing its finished will not complete your journey.

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## **Imagination**

This thinking preference will give you the competitive edge and the ability to form new pictures and sensations that are not perceived through senses such as sight, hearing, or other senses. Imagination will find the answers to tricky situations and help you learn difficult concepts. Embrace your creative imagination it's one of your most powerful tools.

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## **Organized plan**

Which is the crystallization or making your desires clear and logically putting the actions required to succeed into a plan. The plan needs to be well thought out and written down with daily, weekly, monthly and annual schedules and targets.

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## **Persistence**

This one like all the others is a true test of character. It is the sustained effort necessary to induce faith and success. Sustained effort means just that, not give up until you get there and with persistence, you will.

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## **Mastermind.**

This is a team of people around you that when with you have one purpose and one purpose only and that is to unselfishly help you succeed. You have to choose these people carefully, as you are the Captain of your team and therefore the captain of your destiny. You can choose anyone, look around. It must be someone who inspires, drives and can help you on your journey, someone who puts you first. Find them and then ask them to be part of your journey and why you want them on your team.

Get confirmation from them that they will help you succeed. Remember you are the Captain so you also have the power to drop them if they don't or stop helping you or distract you from your goals. Without these 10 steps you will not be as successful as you should be you will be frustrated. Most people are just drifting around in a life raft without direction or purpose, waiting for the wind to blow them in any direction. They are satisfied just to be moving, with the hope that one day they will reach their goals, the land of milk and honey, the land of success. More often than not they have their families with them as well.

I say this to them and to you, without a rudder held firm on a clearly plotted route with a working 10 baby steps plan, they will end up traveling around their world aimlessly and end up at the same spot they started at years earlier without even knowing it. Let this not be you, make the right decisions and just go...



# **Chapter 15: Maintaining Your Memory Improvement**

Creating a sharp memory is not an easy tasks but a result of hard work and determination and most of all discipline. Not everything is done within a day but a continuous practice and undying desire to improve your memory skills. These can be done thru some practice and continuous exercises.

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## Creating an Action Plan

Creating an action plan entail goal setting and proper planning. Your inner vision and your energy are connected. If you wake up in the morning and focus on all the bad things that could possibly happen in a day, your energy level will be low. If you wake up and imagine all the exciting possibilities, and focus on all the great things that you get to do, your energy level lifts. Where your attention goes, your energy flows.

The more reasons you have to do something the better your inner movie will be, and therefore the more energy you will create to do it. If your excuses are high and your reasons are low, you will have no discipline to start. If your reasons are high and your excuses are low, you will have lots of motives, and motives in action creates motivation. Always ask yourself, “How badly do I want it?” If you really, really want it, you will create a strong vision and you will have the self-discipline to do it.

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## Be Rational

When people want to start a task that they have to complete and say something like, “I will do this tomorrow” a loop closes in their mind and they are happy to continue without doing it... because they will do it tomorrow. The problem is that when tomorrow comes the same loop just repeats itself. Or if you say, “I just don’t feel like it” a loop closes because you have tricked yourself into thinking that you will do it when you do feel like it. These pictures and voices, that we control, create our feelings. If you want emotional mastery learn to take control of these pictures, movies, and voices that you run in your mind.

Some people say, “I have to listen to my inner voice because it guides my intuition.” Listen to your intuition or feelings when you are deciding to pass a truck on a busy road, making a massive decision or whether you should climb into an elevator with a freaky looking guy. But when you are following a discipline these feelings only get in the way. If you have to floss your teeth, you don’t have to consult your intuition, you just do it. When you have to exercise you don’t have to listen to your feelings, just do it. Schedule a time in the day for memory training and practice – whether you feel like it or not.

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## Developing Daily Habit

If you want to develop a habit then the only way to achieve this is by doing something daily. You have to review your new skill to renew it. Only by consistently practising your discipline can you turn it into a skill. Most of the research that I have read says it takes twenty-one days to develop a new habit. In my experience it takes a lot longer. Some people think that once the twenty-one days are up the brain will then take over. Then after twenty-one days they give up, waiting for their brain to do the rest. Self-discipline requires you to make a decision daily. Self-discipline requires you to start fresh every day. Every day is a new day. You don't have to practise this skill for the rest of your life. Just for today.

I believe that life does not reward idleness. If you put your arm in a sling for a week you start to lose the use of many of your major muscles. Your brain is made of flesh and blood like the rest of your body, so if you use it, it will improve and if you don't you will lose it. The only way you get good at anything is through self-discipline; remember life only rewards action!

# Conclusion

Memory is the only thing that a man can treasure in his life. Time passed and people go but what they left with you is their memory that change your life in the course of time. Over the years, memory has been given a bad name. It has been associated with rote learning and cramming information into your brain. Educators have said that understanding is the key to learning but how can you understand something if you can't remember it? We have all had this experience: we recognize and understand information but can't recall it when we need it. For example, how many jokes do you know? You've probably heard thousands, but you can only recall about four or five right now. There is a big difference between remembering your four jokes and recognizing or understanding thousands. Understanding doesn't create use: only when you can instantly recall what you understand, and practice using your remembered understanding, do you achieve mastery.